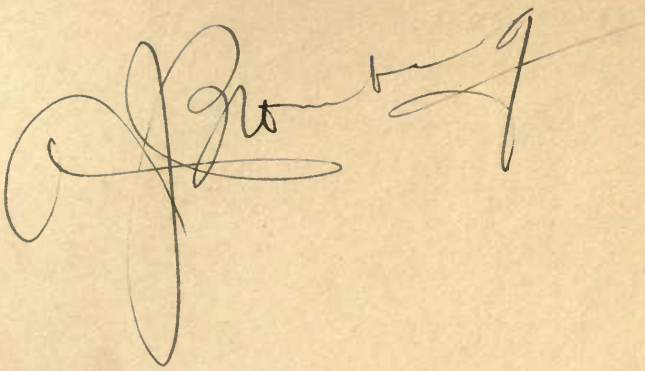
THE MARRIAGE VENTURES OF MARIE-LOUISE

ENGLISH VERSION
BY
EVELYN
DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON



UNIV. OF CALIF. LIBRARY, LOS ANGELES

THE MARRIAGE VENTURES OF MARIE-LOUISE

Marie Louise

From an old print.

THE MARRIAGE VENTURES OF MARIE-LOUISE

BY

MAX BILLARD

ENGLISH VERSION BY

EVELYN DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON

NEW YORK
JAMES POTT & CO.
LONDON: EVELEIGH NASH
1910

RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,
BREAD STREET HILL, E.C., AND
BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	THE EMPRESS MARIE-LOUISE	7
II.	THE COMTE DE NEIPPERG	17
III.	MARIE-LOUISE AT AIX	34
IV.	THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA	53
V.	MARIE-LOUISE AND NEIPPERG IN 1815	78
VI.	MARIE-LOUISE, DUCHESS OF PARMA	98
VII.	THE DEATH OF THE EMPEROR	129
VIII.	THE EMPEROR'S WILL	145
IX.	THE OPENING OF THE TREBBIA BRIDGE	154
X.	THE ILLNESS AND DEATH OF NEIPPERG	162
XI.	MARIE-LOUISE AT GENEVA	177
XII.	THE REVOLUTION OF 1831	185
XIII.	DEATH OF THE DUC DE REICHSTADT	198
XIV.	THE COMTE CHARLES DE BOMBELLES	211
XV.	THE THIRD HUSBAND	232
XVI.	THE ADVENTURES OF A TENOR	242
XVII.	THE DEATH OF MARIE-LOUISE	253
XVIII.	THE LAST YEARS AND DEATH OF THE COMTE DE BOMBELLES	274
XIX.	THE COMTE GUILLAUME AND THE COMTESSE ALBERTINE DE MONTENUOVO	293
	CONCLUSION	309

2125594

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

MARIE-LOUISE	*Frontispiece*	
LE COMTE DE NEIPPERG . . .	*To face p.*	20
MADAME DE STAËL	,,	26
L'ABBÉ WERNER	,,	66
METTERNICH	,,	110
NAPOLEON	,,	130
MARIE-LOUISE	,,	156
THE KING OF ROME	,,	204
JULES LECOMTE	,,	244
COMTE CARLO DI BOMBELLES . .	,,	288

THE MARRIAGE VENTURES OF MARIE-LOUISE

I

THE EMPRESS MARIE-LOUISE

MARIE-LOUISE, the daughter of the Emperor of Austria, was a little bourgeoise of ordinary intelligence and simple tastes when, with tears in her eyes, she left Vienna on March 13, 1810, to meet her future husband, the Emperor of the French.

In her early childhood one of her greatest pleasures was "to roam about the fields of Achau gathering veronica, with which she used to make a kind of tea." She loved the big woods, the fields, the flowers—and above all she delighted in fishing for "cray-fish." The latter was a great amusement to her and, in a letter to Mlle. de Poutet,[1] she gives a child-

[1] Mlle. de Poutet was the daughter of the Comtesse

like and quite incomprehensible description of the way in which she caught them. She was fond of animal life and was devoted to doves, hares and lambs, of which she made pets, and she had also a special fancy for frogs. In one of her letters she gives a description of how she had "very nearly caught a frog green as a pistachio nut," and how at the critical moment it had escaped. One day she received a present of four frogs. "I have given two," she writes, "to my sister Léopoldine [subsequently the wife of Dom Pedro I] and I have kept the others for myself, they are lovely."

The young Archduchess had also a talent for every kind of fancy work, and was especially successful in the making of corsets. She was no less proficient in lace-making and in knitting purses and embroidering bell-pulls.

Notwithstanding all these country pursuits and home occupations, Marie-Louise received a very careful education. She mastered

Colloredo by her first husband, the Baron de Poutet, and subsequently became Comtesse de Crenneville. *Correspondance de Marie-Louise* (1799–1847). Charles Gérold, Vienne, 1887.

French, German, English, Italian and Spanish thoroughly, and even a few words of Turkish and Latin. We learn that on her way to France for her marriage she was addressed in Latin by a young orator of Bar-le-Duc, and that the future Empress, in no way taken aback, surprised this student of Roman classics by replying in the language of Titus Livius and Tacitus.

In her early youth she made great progress in music and drawing—she was indeed a good musician, drew with taste, and even dabbled in oils.[1]

Marie-Louise, the great-niece of Marie-Antoinette, had certainly not been encouraged to love France. She had been taught, writes Méneval (as she herself had told him), "if not to hate, at all events to look with little favour

[1] "On her arrival in France she took lessons from Prud'hon, one of our best artists. She was obliged to give up oils, as she could not bear the smell of the paints." Méneval: *Napoléon et Marie-Louise. Souvenirs Historiques.* Amyot, Paris, 1844, Second Edition, Vol. I. p. 329.

"One day Prud'hon was asked whether he was pleased with his Royal pupil. 'She is very nice,' replied the master.

on the Emperor Napoleon. For had he not more than once brought the House of Habsbourg to within an ace of ruin, and had he not also compelled her family to quit Vienna and wander from town to town midst all the confusion and alarm which invariably follow a hasty retreat? The game which her brother and sisters generally played consisted in setting up a line of toy soldiers to represent the French army, placing at its head the dirtiest and most repulsive figure they could find, which they would then proceed to attack with pins and to insult in every conceivable way. It was thus that these children thought to avenge all the misery inflicted on their family by that dreaded Captain, against whom the entire strength of the Austrian armies and the thunderings of the Vienna Cabinet were powerless to contend."

'And what progress does she make?' 'Not so much as I should like. Her Majesty complains that drawing dirties her fingers, so she leaves her pencils alone.' 'What then does she do during your lessons?' 'She goes to sleep,' sighed Prud'hon." Ch. Gueulette: *Mlle. Mayer et Prud'hon.* Gazette des Beaux Arts. 1 Oct., 1879.

It must be remembered that when Marie-Louise was first told of her suggested marriage with Napoleon, she "looked upon herself as a sacrifice to the Minotaur."

In a letter to her "chère Victoire" [Mlle. de Poutet], she thus expressed resignation to her fate:

"Since Napoleon's divorce, I open each *Gazette de Francfort* with the hope of finding the name of his new wife, and I own that this delay causes me great anxiety. I commit myself to the hands of Divine Providence, who alone knows what is best for us. But if the worst comes to the worst, I am ready to set aside my personal feelings for the good of the State, convinced as I am that true happiness can only be found in devotion to duty, even when opposed to one's dearest wishes.

"I cannot bear to think of it, but if it must be, my mind is made up, although it will be a very painful as well as a twofold sacrifice. Pray for me that it may not come to pass."

On January 23, 1810, she wrote again to Mlle. de Poutet in the same unselfish spirit:

"I know it is rumoured in Vienna that I am to marry the great Napoleon; I trust that it may remain a rumour, and am truly grateful, my dear Victoire, for your kind wishes on the subject. I pray without ceasing that it will not come to pass, and if it is to be, I know that I shall be the only person not to rejoice at the event."

In April 1810 the sacrifice was made—or it was no longer regarded as such. The triumphant soldier married the daughter of the Cæsars, and was thus enabled to gratify his pride by presenting Marie-Louise to France as the prize of his many victories.

Ceremonies and fêtes of every description followed, during which expressions of joy and gratitude for the restoration of peace were heard on all sides.

Marie-Louise appears to have entered seriously into her new duties of Empress and wife. She was proud of her husband, and wrote to Mme. de Crenneville that "her happiest hours were those spent with the Emperor." In another letter she expresses

her joy at being a mother, and prays heaven that the King of Rome "may some day be what his father is—the delight of all who know him."

In the month of June 1812 Marie-Louise, unaccompanied by the Emperor, spent a few days with her family at Prague. Notwithstanding the excitement attending the fêtes and entertainments held in her honour, she never forgot her husband, as will be seen by the following: "The Emperor writes to me very often; every day that I receive a letter from him is one of happiness. . . . nothing reconciles me to his absence, not even the fact of my being with my family."

She writes in the same strain to Mme. de Crenneville: "You can imagine my happiness at being with my family, for you know how I love them all; nevertheless, my pleasure is clouded by sorrow at being separated from the Emperor: I cannot be really happy unless I am with him."

On August 15 (the Emperor's fête day) the Empress wrote an even more touching letter:

"You are quite right in thinking that I have been less happy this 15th of August than in former years. You know me well enough to be aware that when I am unhappy I suffer terribly, although I do not show it. You may imagine my distress at the absence of the Emperor, which only his return will remove. I am in a continual state of anxiety and worry. One day without a letter from him makes me miserable, and even when I receive one it is only a temporary relief."

This letter, with its somewhat exaggerated sentiments of affection, brings us to the end of the halcyon days of Marie-Louise.

It was at this time that the Emperor crossed the Niemen. Disaster ensued, followed by reaction in his favour, and disaster once more. He was forced to quit France—France now as humbled by adversity as she had formerly been satiated by glory—and in his little island kingdom devoted himself to the elaboration of his last scheme for the discomfiture of the powers arrayed against him.

Not even in the presence of the wreck of

the Empire and the dire calamities which overtook the country, nor at the moment when the allies, having vanquished their formidable enemy, were making their entrance into the Louvre, did Marie-Louise show any signs of sincere grief. Nor was she more affected when, by decree of the Senate, Napoleon was deprived of his throne and the family succession was abolished.

In spite of the evident and deep anxiety of all around her at Blois, the Empress, from whose letters we have just quoted such touching passages, not only betrayed a weakness of character calculated to assist the schemes of the allies, but at times an indifference and light-heartedness which, in the circumstances, were positively unseemly. Even at a moment such as this, she could smile and jest with those around her. We will only recall one such incident, and in order to avoid any suspicion of malice or exaggeration we will quote the words of the Comte d'Haussonville, who is responsible for the story: "I was present when the Comte de Sainte-Aulaire related an anecdote

which showed that the feelings of the Empress at that time were in no way suited to the circumstances. The arrival of M. de Sainte-Aulaire was announced to Her Majesty very early in the morning, while she was still in bed. She was but half awake when she received him, sitting at the side of the bed with her bare feet showing from beneath the coverlet.

"Completely overcome by the gravity of the situation, for the letter of which he was the bearer not only brought the news of the fall of the Empire, but also that of Napoleon's attempted suicide at Fontainebleau, M. de Sainte-Aulaire stood with his eyes cast down, anxious to appear unconscious of the effect produced on the Empress by this sad intelligence: 'Ah! you are looking at my feet,' she exclaimed, 'I am always being told how pretty they are.'"

This incident in the life of Marie-Louise would alone be sufficient to disclose her true character, but, as we shall see presently, it was when she left France that her extraordinary nature was fully revealed.

II

THE COMTE DE NEIPPERG

On April 25, 1814, when duty should have taken her to the Island of Elba, Marie-Louise left Grosbois for Vienna, accompanied by Mme. de Brignole, Baron de Bausset, Dr. Corvisart, the faithful Méneval and Caffarelli.

Her military escort consisted of an Austrian general and his staff, and on April 30, as she crossed the frontier, she bade her last farewell to France.

Historians relate the events which followed —the royal progress of the forgetful wife, how the loyal people of the Tyrol greeted the daughter of their Emperor as she traversed their country, the triumphant arrival at Schœnbrünn, and the tortuous diplomacy of the Vienna Congress. History also tells us how the sovereigns assembled at Vienna celebrated the downfall of the man who had ruled Europe, under the

very eyes of the woman who had but a very few days before been Empress of the French.

Dr. Corvisart, in whom Marie-Louise had the greatest confidence, "was of opinion that the baths of Aix in Savoy were absolutely necessary for her health, and would not consent to her going elsewhere."

The Emperor of Austria at first raised the objection "that there must be waters in Germany which would suit his daughter," and he thought that it would in any case be more seemly, failing Carlsbad or Baden, were she to take the waters at Pisa, or some other place in Tuscany.

Whether her desire to be nearer to the Island of Elba was prompted by some lingering affection, or by a wish to escape from the jealous supervision of her step-mother, Marie-Louise obstinately insisted on going to Aix, and the Emperor at last yielded to her wishes.

On June 28 the Empress took leave of her father at Baden, and on the following day, under the assumed name of the Duchesse de Colorno (a title borrowed from one of her palaces in the duchy of Parma), left Schœn-

brünn, accompanied by an exclusively French retinue.

She passed the night of June 30 at the Abbey of Lambach, a small village where the French had repulsed the Russians in 1805—every step of the journey must indeed have reminded her of France and her recent glories.

On the third day she arrived at Munich, where Prince Eugene entertained her in his palace. Having spent a day at Constance, she passed through Baden, and on her arrival at Payerne she was received at the Château de Prangins by her brother-in-law, King Joseph, who gave her a most hearty welcome.

On the evening of July 10 she arrived at the Sécherons Inn, in the immediate vicinity of Geneva.

Her suite consisted of the Comtesse de Brignole, Mlle. Rabusson her reader, and the latter's *fiancé*, Dr. Hereau, and, of course, the faithful Méneval, to whom we owe the very circumstantial details of this journey, which lasted six days.

They visited the celebrated valley of Cha-

mouny, the plateau of Montanvers, the mighty glaciers of Bossons and the "mer de glace," the beautiful cascade of Pissevache and the slopes of Balme.

"It was impossible to tire the Duchesse de Colorno, and her courage amounted almost to foolhardiness. It was evident that she was seeking excitement in order to divert her mind from other subjects. She displayed an evenness of temper and an amount of endurance which astonished even her guides."

Méneval tells us that during these excursions the Empress "either rode a mule or walked," and he adds that her health was much improved by the exercise.

Marie-Louise returned to the Sécherons Inn on July 16, and left the next day for Aix, where she was to take the waters.

As she was entering the town an officer in the uniform of an Austrian general, and accompanied by an aide-de-camp, approached the door of the Empress's carriage with a low bow. He was apparently between thirty-eight and forty years of age, of medium height, with a

Le Comte de Neipperg.

good figure, fair, thin, curly hair and a ruddy complexion which lacked, however, the freshness of youth. He had lost the sight of his right eye in action, and a black bandage concealed the scar left by the wound, but the other eye was bright and searching. He announced himself as Adam-Albert de Neipperg.

Born on April 8, 1775, Neipperg, notwithstanding the name he bore, was neither Austrian nor German, his real father being a Frenchman, as will be seen presently. His putative father, Leopold Joseph de Neipperg, was born in 1728, and died in 1792, having risen to the rank of ambassador in the diplomatic service, and it is to his genius we owe the first "writing-machine."

In 1762 he invented a letter-copier, of which he published the following description :—

SPECIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION
OF A NEW MACHINE

CALLED

THE SECRET COPYIST

The Marriage Ventures

INVENTED IN THE YEAR 1762 AT NAPLES

BY

THE COMTE DE NEIPPERG

CHAMBERLAIN AND IMPERIAL PRIVY COUNCILLOR OF THE HOLY EMPIRE, DURING HIS SOJOURN AT THE COURT OF HIS SICILIAN MAJESTY, AS MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THEIR IMPERIAL, ROYAL AND APOSTOLIC MAJESTIES

By means of which machine, three or more copies of a written document can be made without the assistance of secretary or copyist as quickly as a single copy in MS. could possibly be executed. Nothing could be more simple and more easily worked than this contrivance.

VIENNA

To be obtained from Jean Thomas de Turttnern, Printer and Bookseller to the Court, 1764.

The first Neipperg mentioned in history was Field-Marshal Eberhard-Frédéric (1655–1725), member of an ancient German-Swabian family whose ancestors went back to Birtílo de Schwaigern, about 1120. He was the great-grandfather of Adam-Albert. His ancestor, Wilhelm Reinhard (1684–1774), fought the Turks, and was Governor of the capital of the Banat of Temesvar. It was he who signed the unfortunate treaty which restored the town of

Belgrade to Turkey. Condemned to imprisonment, and subsequently restored to favour, we find him fighting in Silesia, and beaten by Frédéric II at Molvitz. He was, notwithstanding, appointed Commander-in-chief of the Austrian armies, and was president of the superior council of war when he died. The residence and the interests of the family centred in Schwaigern.

Leopold de Neipperg, when on a diplomatic mission to Paris, made the acquaintance of a French officer, the Comte de ——, a perfect type of a man of the world, whom he received as an intimate guest at his house.

The Countess, who had perhaps hitherto been a model of fidelity, was not now, at any rate, quite impervious to the seductive ways of this romantic, passionate young man, who was unremitting in his attentions to her.

The inventive genius of the Comte de Neipperg leads one to suppose that he was influenced rather by the love of machinery than by the machinery of love, and that he spent all the time he could spare from his diplomatic duties

in the quiet of his study, elaborating the details of some new invention.

As to his wife, he troubled his head but little about her, leaving her entirely to her own devices. This conduct naturally led to results not difficult to foresee, and, before many months had passed, the Countess was desperately in love with the young French officer. Their early relations were as innocent as a German idyll, but soon became more intimate, resulting eventually in the birth of the future General Neipperg.

Adam-Albert Neipperg, who received his early education at Stuttgart and Strasbourg, and subsequently in France, at the age of fifteen adopted the profession of a soldier, in which he was destined to rise so high. He joined the Austrian Army in 1790, and received his baptism of fire at Jemmapes and Neerwinden. On September 14, at Dœlen, he fell from his horse covered with sabre-cuts from the enemy's cavalry, and was left on the field for dead.

On the following day he was picked up among the wounded and conveyed to the hos-

pital of Saint-Tronc, where it was soon discovered that he spoke French too well for a German, and he was consequently within an ace of being shot as an *émigré*.

He, however, escaped this fate, and soon recovered from his wounds, although a sabre-cut had completely destroyed the sight of his right eye. After being exchanged as a prisoner of war, he rejoined his corps and took part in most of the sanguinary encounters of those memorable Italian campaigns, such as took place at Cassano, Novi, on the Mincio, at Trebbia, and finally at Marengo, where he roused old Mélas from his torpor and compelled him to realize that the battle was not lost.

In 1810 he was sent to Paris to negotiate an exchange of prisoners. Subsequently he was appointed ambassador to Stockholm, where he made his diplomatic début. He supported the *rapprochement* of Russia and England with Sweden, from whose king he received the Grand Cross of the Ordre de l'Epée.

Stockholm society received him with open arms, and his successes in that capital were not

confined to diplomacy alone. It was here that he first made the acquaintance of Madame de Staël, that woman of genius, whose brilliant wit was in no way impaired by the fact that she was then a fugitive from her country. She gave this young officer of well-known chivalrous tendencies, who was then thirty-five years of age, the appropriate nickname of the German Bayard.

Then followed the sad though heroic campaigns of 1812 and 1813, and Neipperg was recalled to resume a command in the army. He took part in the colossal struggle of France with the European coalition which had been formed against her.

He fought at Reichenberg, at Stolpen and at Leipzig, where he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Field-Marshal on the field of battle, and he was subsequently selected to carry to Vienna the news of this victory, due in no small degree to the treasonable conduct of the Saxon troops.

The scene changes; Neipperg is sent to Naples to negotiate with Murat, and he induces

Photo by Braun Clément et Cie. Art Repro Co.

Madame De Staël

From a painting by François Gérard.

the brave but unfortunate Joachim to sign a treaty with the allies on January 11, 1814, by which he, Napoleon's own brother-in-law, undertakes to unite his standard with that of Austria—a step which was not destined to improve his future fortunes.[1]

At the termination of this mission the soldier-diplomatist returned to Vienna. His conspicuous intelligence led Prince Metternich to realize what a useful agent he might prove, and the Austrian statesman was not slow to put his capabilities to a further test. Neipperg, therefore, is sent to Mantua bearing the olive-branch in the shape of an autograph letter from the King of Bavaria to his son-in-law, Prince Eugene. He makes use of this letter as a lever to induce the Prince to follow the example of his father-in-law and to discontinue a resistance which the fall and abdication of Napoleon had rendered useless.

Eugene replied to his arguments as follows:

[1] Murat undertook to supply the allies with 30,000 men, and in return his kingdom of Naples was guaranteed to him.

"I understand nothing about politics; but, if it is true that the Emperor has abdicated, there is not a moment to lose; let us join our troops at once, and march in support of the rights of the Empress Regent and her son."

This was not the answer which the wily diplomatist hoped for, but the object which intrigue failed to attain was brought about by the fall of the Colossus of Europe.

The foregoing will, in a few words, have described the life up to now of the individual who is about to take a prominent place in the following pages.

The sight of this plain, middle-aged man at the door of her carriage, and the recollection that he had been, both as soldier and diplomatist, one of Napoleon's most inveterate enemies, "produced a disagreeable impression on the mind of Marie-Louise, and she made no attempt to conceal it." She had at once recognized the General who had acted as her Chamberlain during her visit to Prague in 1812, although she had not seen him since.[1]

[1] We should here draw attention to an opinion, ac-

This Austrian officer, chosen by Prince Metternich to amuse and interest the Empress, was an insinuating and flattering courtier. "He was also highly accomplished, and a good musician. Energetic and clever, but not over-refined, he was able to hide his subtlety under the cloak of assumed simplicity. He expressed himself gracefully both in speech and in writing."

He was also a hero of romance, although he did not possess all the attractions and seductiveness usually attributed to individuals of that

---

cording to which, the attachment of Marie-Louise to Neipperg dates from as far back as this period. "It was probably then that their *liaison* commenced, and M. de Bausset, in mentioning the arrival of Neipperg in Savoy, gives us very plainly to understand it. . . . Besides, the following is what M. Bresson, who used to see a good deal of my nephew, said he had heard from La Valette, whom he had received and concealed in his house after his escape. At the commencement of 1814 a messenger was arrested or found dead, I forget which. He was the bearer of a letter from Marie-Louise to Neipperg, in which she said, 'Let us be patient. All this is coming to grief and cannot last much longer.' M. La Valette had seen the letter and read it. He repeated it to M. Bresson who told my nephew." Mme. Cavaignac, *Les Memories d'une inconnue*, 1780–1816, p. 361. Plon: Paris, 1894.

order. Notwithstanding the loss of an eye and the black bandage[1] which he wore in consequence, and in spite of his thirty-nine years the blood of youth still flowed in Neipperg's veins; he could have given lessons in gallantry to Don Juan himself, and no conceivable Lovelace would have been his equal where women's hearts were concerned. His wife[2] was a lady

[1] Neipperg wore this unsightly bandage all his life. It might well be asked why this lady-killer did not take to a glass eye, which was not an invention of even recent date. In the 1579 edition of *Les Œuvres d'Ambroise Paré* is the first mention of an "artificial eye made for the use of the patient." In his book this great surgeon describes and gives drawings of artificial eyes made of leather and metal. As he does not claim to be the author of this invention, there is reason to believe that before his time this ocular adjunct had been in use.

[2] Thérèse *née* Comtesse Pola, who died April 23, 1815. "He (the Baron du Montet) had seen a great deal of him in former days in Italy when he was possionately in love with the Comtesse Trento, who caused her first marriage to be dissolved in order to marry him. It was a very difficult matter to arrange, and, one day when Neipperg, after the manner of a man madly in love, was inveighing against the obstacles and delays in connection with his marriage with the Comtesse Trento he exclaimed, ' There is, after all, no

whom "he took from her husband, M. de Remondini," at Bologna, on his way to Mantua, and he did not marry her till the year 1813.

On leaving Milan, Neipperg had said to his mistress in reference to Marie-Louise: "Before six months are over I shall be her lover, and not long afterwards her husband." The heart of Marie-Louise was but feebly garrisoned, and six months were not required to bring about its surrender.

On her arrival at Aix Marie-Louise lodged at a villa belonging to a M. Chevalley, situated on a hill overlooking the town. From this picturesque situation the most beautiful view was obtained, embracing the lake of Bourget, the meadows beyond, and a blue range of mountains with their rugged rocks and snowy peaks in the far distance. This house, which had been prepared for her reception by M. Bal-

---

cause for surprise as it was prophesied to me that my marriages would be of an extraordinary nature.'" *La Baronne du Montet*, p. 296.

louhey, had been formerly occupied by Queen Hortense.

It should be said that at this period Marie-Louise had not completely forgotten her husband, and that they still corresponded. The ladies and gentlemen of her suite were the Duchesse de Montebello, widow of a marshal of France, the Comtesse de Brignole, her lady-in-waiting, the Baron de Bausset and the Comte de Cussy, her chamberlains, both strong Bonapartists, and finally Méneval, whose love and admiration for Napoleon knew no bounds. Thus her court, with the exception of General Neipperg, was entirely French, a fact which served to maintain a connecting link between the Empress and France. All her surroundings, also, reminded the Duchesse de Colorno of the Emperor: her coachmen and footmen, also French, continued to wear the livery of the Tuileries, and the Imperial arms were still displayed on the panels of her carriages.

At the commencement of her stay at Aix the audiences which the Empress granted to General Neipperg were more or less official, and

during the short time that Méneval was there—and we quote Méneval himself—there was nothing to lead to the suspicion that this man, sent by Austria to simulate the part of an admirer, would soon become the real lover, and shortly afterwards the husband of the daughter of the Cæsars and of the actual wife of the great Conqueror.[1]

On July 19 Méneval left Marie-Louise and spent a considerable time with his family.

[1] Neipperg had, however, already gained the confidence and friendship of the Empress. On July 22 she wrote from Aix to the Emperor Francis as follows: "My rooms here are small but comfortable; Count de Neuperg [*sic*] is most attentive and I like his ways." Arch. de Vienne. Quoted by Auguste Fournier, *Marie-Louise et la Chute de Napoléon.* Extract from the *Revue Historique*, p. 13. Paris, 1903.

III

MARIE-LOUISE AT AIX

MARIE-LOUISE had no intention of spending her time at Aix as a mournful, disconsolate grass-widow. No sooner had she settled in her villa than she "took part in all the public entertainments and, surrounded by the cosmopolitan society of a watering-place, instead of behaving like an Empress—an Empress of the French recently dethroned and separated from husband and son—she assumed the manners of a smart young woman seeking to emancipate and amuse herself. Indeed, notwithstanding the terrible disasters which had befallen Napoleon, the Empire and France, she thought only of pleasure. She arranged expeditions and gave frequent garden-parties, and attended others to which she was invited." Quite a sensation was created by her evening parties,

at which Talma, always admirable in his powerful rendering of passion, would give recitations of the most famous scenes from the English drama.

Dressed in a neat habit "she went for long rides every day," and she took a great fancy to "boating on the lake of Bourget." Moreover, this life of excitement seemed to agree marvellously with the Empress: "My stay here has done my health good," she writes to one of her friends; "I bathe regularly, which no doubt strengthens my lungs." She was evidently so much stronger that she was not afraid to sit, with but lightly covered shoulders, to Isabey, who had also come to spend a few days at Aix.

This artist, whose work is so finished and refined and whose signature is to be found on so many portraits of Napoleon, painted, while at Aix, the miniature of the Empress which she presented to her first chamberlain, M. de Bausset.

The 15th of August—the birthday, as also the fête day, of the fallen sovereign—recalled

to the mind of Marie-Louise the image of the husband she was already beginning to forget. Her thoughts went back involuntarily to the days not long past when, seated by the Emperor's side and amidst surroundings indicative of his power, she was rapturously received by the entire population of Paris. These reminiscences seem for a moment to have softened her heart and must even, we should think, have brought tears to her eyes.

She wrote to Méneval—

"August 15, 1814. . . . This is one of my sad days, or am I deceiving myself! How can I be cheerful when I am obliged to spend this anniversary, to me so sacred, far from the two individuals I love the most."

These were, however, but fleeting thoughts. Marie-Louise, after spending one day in a state of melancholy depression, returned more enthusiastically than ever to her life of excitement. Her conduct and manners had become so unseemly, that the Duc de Berry, at the Council of Ministers on August 5, did not hesitate to assert that "Marie-Louise was be-

having at Aix in the most undignified way," that instead of taking the waters, she was spending her time "surrounded by French officers." Consequently on the 9th of the same month Talleyrand wrote to Metternich, saying: "That as Madame l'Archiduchesse had more than completed her cure at the waters, it would be as well that her visit to Aix should come to an end." The same idea prevailed at Vienna, and about August 15 she received a letter from Metternich by which she is informed that her father not only forbids her to visit Parma, but expresses a desire that her conduct in future "will be more decorous."

She was, of course, obliged to comply with these injunctions, and therefore quitted Aix at the beginning of September; but before actually starting for Vienna she insisted upon making an expedition to Switzerland, and Neipperg, who had by this time gained her confidence and affection, acted as her guide.

We must now turn our thoughts towards the Emperor, who, seemingly, was seeking repose

from his grand ideas of universal conquest in his little kingdom of Elba.

He was busy preparing apartments at San Martino for the reception of the Empress, and might be seen, in silk stockings and buckled shoes, personally supervising the workmen. He had even gone so far as to suggest to the painter, who was to decorate the drawing-room ceiling, an allegorical subject full of poetical charm: "two turtle-doves attached to the opposite ends of a ribbon, a knot in which would tighten as they flew apart." These two white birds, symbols of sincerity and innocence, were to represent the Emperor and Marie-Louise—Marie-Louise who was already the mistress of the one-eyed Neipperg, and on the point of starting with him on a romantic tour amidst the glaciers of the Oberland.

On August 10 a letter from the Empress was brought to Napoleon by a so-called commercial traveller. It was dated July 31, and was the last letter he was to receive from her. In it she informed him of the fact of her being obliged to return to Vienna, at the same time

assuring him of her affection, and of her determination to return to him as soon as possible.

The Emperor was quite prepared to wait patiently, but, anxious to have more frequent news, begged her "to address her letters to M. Senno and send them to Genoa under cover to M. Constantin Gatelli," a Genoese merchant "with whom his Majesty was in business correspondence with regard to his poultry-yard and dairy at San Martino." It was indeed pitiable, writes M. Paul Gruyer, that Napoleon, who had worn the purple and been master of the world, should be reduced to soliciting the services of M. Constantin Gatelli and assuming a name which did not belong to him. For ten days he had received no news; he began to be uneasy, and resolved to learn the truth about the Empress.

On August 20 he sent for Hurault de Sorbée, a captain in the Imperial guards, whom he had married to Mlle. Katzener, maid of honour to Marie-Louise.

The Emperor, in giving this officer leave to

pay a visit to his young wife at Aix, made him understand that he must at all costs obtain a secret interview with the Empress and, with the assistance of his wife, induce her to embark with him at Genoa for the Island of Elba. Hurault arrived at Aix; Neipperg, however, being on the watch, caused him to be arrested and sent to Paris, where the police had orders to prevent his return to Elba. As far as Napoleon was concerned, the fact that Captain Hurault was unable to return to Elba was not so much to be regretted, for he could but have conveyed to his Majesty the sad intelligence that in the Empress's mind her husband was but a fleeting memory.[1]

[1] "A fortnight ago I received a visit from one of the Emperor's officers, bearer of a letter, in which he tells me to start immediately for the Island of Elba where he awaits me with much impatience. This is the second officer who has called upon me within a week. By the first (Colonel Laczinski) I replied that I had to be in Vienna in a few days and that it would be impossible for me to go to Elba without your permission. I have not yet replied to the second letter, of which Captain Hurault was the bearer. I tell you all this, my dear father, because I confide everything to you, and I

Marie-Louise was then, as we now know, on the point of starting with her lover to spend a honeymoon amidst the mountains of Switzerland, where they hoped for a time to forget the troubles of everyday life.

There is reason to believe that at this time the relations between Marie-Louise and Neipperg had gone beyond the limits of a dream, and that the friendship that existed between this society diplomatist and the Empress was now no longer platonic.[1] Certain it is that the time

---

should not like these occurrences to lead you to any want of confidence in me. You may be quite sure that I never was less inclined to start on such a journey than I am now, and I give you my word of honour that I will never undertake it without having previously obtained your permission to do so. Please tell me what answer I should send to the Emperor." Letter from Marie-Louise of September 30, quoted by Auguste Fournier.

[1] This is the opinion generally held by historians. But it is only right to say that quite recently M. Edouard Wertheimer (*Der Herzog von Reichstadt*, p. 135, note iii., and p. 136, note i.), basing his argument on recent documents, unhesitatingly declares, that this "sad episode in the Empress's life was of later

was fast approaching when, according to M. Imbert de Saint-Amand, the Emperor "would be but a stranger to Marie-Louise.

"At this time the influence of Neipperg over the Empress became daily more dominant, whereas that of her former councillors, MM. de Méneval and de Bausset, proportionately diminished. Marie-Louise who, at first would not tolerate even the suggestion of being in Vienna at the same time as the sovereigns who had humbled her husband, now became quite reconciled to the idea. The Comte de Neipperg never left her, and her courage in undertaking not only fatiguing, but at times even dangerous excursions among glaciers and

---

date." The documents on which M. Wertheimer relies are probably a letter from Neipperg to the Emperor, of August 20, in which the General states his readiness to give up his post and rejoin the troops at Pavia, as his mission was only to last during the sojourn of Marie-Louise on French territory, and on another letter to Metternich, dated Berne, September 22, in which the General begs to be appointed ambassador at Turin where "he hopes to be able to be of some use in that diplomatic as well as military position."

mountains was entirely due to the knowledge that he was beside her. He had the additional merit of being a good musician, which enabled him not only to play to her, but also to accompany her songs. It would be impossible to imagine a more devoted, assiduous and obsequious servant than was the General at this time. Perhaps he was even then her lover, in any case he was rapidly becoming indispensable to her. He flattered himself that he would be able to solve all difficulties, overcome all obstacles and finally lead Marie-Louise to that Duchy of Parma which she looked upon as a promised land."

On September 9, 1814, Marie-Louise and her suite spent the night at Lausanne, and the next day pursued the journey to Payerne. An hour before arriving at the gates of this town, "Madame de Colorno stopped her carriage to listen to an old-fashioned serenade prepared in her honour by the Protestant minister of Payerne, who had taken up a position on some rising ground in the Bois de Boulez. This good man's melodies were accompanied by a

flute and violin played by his two daughters. At the conclusion of this little family concert, they offered fruit and flowers to Marie-Louise, and, their brother dressed in ancient Swiss costume and standing with his herd at the edge of the wood, sang the "Ranz des Vaches."

This unexpected rural scene was a complete success, and nearly brought tears to the eyes of the Duchesse de Colorno, who warmly congratulated the country maidens and the cooing Thyrcis, whose melodies transported her for a moment to the realms of Arcadia.

Marie-Louise slept at Fribourg on the 10th and on the 11th at Berne. She visited the glaciers of Grindelwald, Lauterbrunnen, and the Rigi, and took especial interest in the famous Agricultural College at Hofwil.

But before they embarked on expeditions to these heaven-reaching heights of solitary grandeur they, perhaps prudently, arranged to leave the Baron de Bausset and Méneval behind them, neither the one nor the other being of an age to endure the hardships of such excursions, added to which, both these gentlemen

dreaded the fogs and attacks of rheumatism which might ensue.

They excused themselves without difficulty, saying that they had both of them seen enough snow in the arid plains of Russia to satisfy them, and had no desire to repeat such experiences. This left the field clear for Neipperg, who proved himself a pleasant, attentive, indefatigable guide, always laying himself out to oblige the Empress and, no doubt, pressing his court with the suggestive glances of an ardent lover.

Marie-Louise returned to Berne ten days afterwards, and here found a messenger sent by the Emperor of Austria, with the news of the death of her grandmother, Queen Caroline. She appeared to be much grieved at the sad intelligence. An unexpected visit, however, soon diverted her mind from this passing sorrow. The Princess of Wales, already so well known on account of her family differences, stopped at Berne on her way to Rome and sent Lord Craven, her chamberlain, to present her duty to Marie-Louise. M. de Bausset

was directed by the Empress to return the compliment to the Princess and at the same time to invite her and her suite to dinner.

The eccentric traveller to whom he presented himself was a woman forty-six years of age and of medium height. She had regular and somewhat pronounced features, with a fresh complexion and much facial expression. She was wearing a full dress of white muslin trimmed with lace, and a long veil of the same material fell on her shoulders. A row of diamonds encircling her head formed a diadem, and she also wore a necklace of magnificent pearls. The Princess, indeed, might have been taken for some priestess of ancient Greece.[1]

[1] Bausset, p. 54—Méneval. *Souvenirs Historiques*, II., pp. 293, 294 and 295. One might be led to imagine that M. de Bausset and M. de Méneval were romancing were it not that we have other descriptions, not less fantastic, of the costumes worn by this strange woman. The Baronne du Montet, who saw Queen Caroline at Vienna in April 1817, writes as follows in her *Souvenirs:* "She appeared the day before yesterday at the theatre attired in white satin trousers, over which was a very short skirt. Her hair was dressed very

She received Bausset most graciously and observing that he was looking with evident interest "at a little child of ten to twelve years old whose hand she held, said: 'This is my protégé Austin who is mentioned in the *Memoirs* that the world has attributed to me.'" She begged Bausset to tell the Empress she would visit her on the following day, and the chamberlain took his leave, charmed with her graciousness and intelligence.

---

high and diamonds were arranged in strange fashion on her fantastic head-dress." The Baronne du Montet saw her at another time at her window when she was not less quaintly attired: "She wore a kind of bonnet or cap bordered with fur, and a braided green cloth jacket" (pp. 161–162).

The following is a description of Queen Caroline by the Comtesse de Boigne, who saw her in 1818: "She was a fat woman of about fifty years of age, short, round and of ruddy complexion. She wore a pink bonnet with seven or eight pink feathers fluttering in the wind, a low cut bodice, and a short white skirt which scarcely reached her knees, below which her thick legs, clad in pink boots, were visible. A pink scarf, which she was continually draping about her, completed the costume." *Mémoires de la Comtesse de Boigne*, II. 1815–1819, p. 51. Plon: Paris, 1907.

The next day the two Princesses exchanged formal visits, after which Caroline dined with the Empress. She was accompanied by the members of her suite, whom Bausset had been instructed to invite. They were Lady Forbes, her lady-in-waiting, whose appearance was no less peculiar than that of her mistress, Lord Craven, her first chamberlain, Sir —— Gill, another chamberlain, Captain Hesse, her equerry, and Dr. Holland.

The dinner was full of animation, and was followed by a delightfully lively evening. After an interesting discussion on music and the fine arts, Neipperg went to the piano and played a series of Italian melodies with his usual spirit.

The Princess was begged to sing and at once agreed to do so, provided the Empress would join her in a duet. Marie-Louise "made shyness an excuse for not doing so," but the Princess encouraged her, saying, "That as far as she personally was concerned she was never frightened, but was only sorry for her friends." She insisted so strongly that the Empress

finally yielded. They chose the celebrated duet from Mozart's masterpiece *Don Juan.*

After Neipperg had struck a few chords and played a preliminary symphony, the two Princesses came to the piano and then commenced the soft and melancholy bars of the introduction, at the conclusion of which Caroline in an amorous voice took up the strain—

"Là, nous deux mains unies,
Là, tu vas dire oui.
Par ces sentes fleuries
Eloignons—nous d'ici."

And Zerlina, with tender and natural expression, replied to Don Juan—

"Je veux et puis je n'ose,
Le cœur me bat plus fort,
L'ivresse, qu'il me cause
Me peut tromper encor."

Then came Caroline's turn again, and she commenced the third verse in a "deep and sonorous voice."

After the last stanza, in which both joined, the little drawing-room rang with applause, and no doubt the finale of that famous duet, in

which the two Princesses displayed the utmost qualities of their voices, was honoured with cries for an encore. It was in any case a charming scene and a lovely picture.

The day after this pleasant evening Marie-Louise left Berne, and spent the night at Zurich. General Neipperg, wishing to remind the Empress of the attractions of her native land while making her forget those of her adopted country, hinted that she should pay a visit to the cradle of her ancient race, the ruins of the Castle of Rodolphe of Habsbourg. They therefore started along the Aaren road, and within twelve kilomètres of that town, on the right bank of the Aar, they reached an old dismantled tower covered with ivy and moss.

This was all that remained of the castle on which the ravages of eight centuries had left their mark.

In it the young and beautiful heiress could find no other place on which to rest but the ruins around her, in the midst of which the ingenious Neipperg suddenly and with an exclamation of triumph "picked up a piece

of flat and pointed iron in which he was pleased to recognize a fragment of Rodolphe's lance." According to Méneval, the Empress was so easily taken in by this deception that, on her return to Vienna, fragments of the fictitious relic were set in rings of gold which the descendant of Rodolphe presented to the General, Mme. de Brignole, Méneval and the Baron de Bausset.

Marie-Louise, at the conclusion of this long expedition, insisted on going to the Lake of the Four Cantons, and on visiting the little chapel of Küssnacht, erected near the spot where William Tell escaped from the boat which was conveying him a prisoner to that stronghold. She was then conducted to the ravine where, from his ambush, the great liberator drew his bow with fatal effect on Gessler, Albert the First's tyrannical lieutenant of Switzerland.

She was also anxious to see once more the pine-trees and snows of those glacial regions, and for that purpose undertook a final excursion to the summit of the Rigi. Then she

made her way to Schwitz, and thence started for Vienna *via* Saint-Gall, Constance, Munich and Braunau, the town where four and a half years before the Queen of Naples, surrounded by a brilliant court, had received the new Empress of the French at the hands of her family, and had adorned her with the usual emblems of sovereignty.

Marie-Louise arrived at Schœnbrünn on October 4, 1814, at seven o'clock in the morning. She embraced her son, whom she found in perfect health, and who greeted his mother with every mark of love and affection, and she here again found herself amid the surroundings which had given birth to the day-dreams of her youth.

IV

THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

On September 26, 1814, a heterogeneous collection of emperors, kings, minor sovereigns and diplomatists from the four quarters of Europe assembled at Vienna. Notwithstanding the fact that at that time diplomatists were supposed to be entirely absorbed in the complicated discussion of the interests of peoples and thrones, magnificent fêtes, parties, parades, gala performances, concerts, charades with the usual accessories of tinselled costumes, etc., followed each other in quick succession. This masquerading led to the felicitous remark of the Prince de Ligne who, by the bye, was so soon to end his career midst the delights of this modern Capua: "Le congrès danse, mais ne marche pas."

Five days after the return of the Empress, a fête was given in Vienna at which the sovereigns commemorated the fall of Napoleon in the

same hall which, four and a half years before, had witnessed the celebration of the marriage of the daughter of the Cæsars with the conqueror of kings. Marie-Louise had a great wish to be present, incognita of course, at this public rejoicing—a ceremony which surely could but have added to the grief which any one but she in similar circumstances would have experienced—

"Hidden at the back of a box which had been improvised in the roof of the great hall of the Vienna palace, she watched, without any apparent emotion, the dances in which such personages as Metternich, Castlereagh and other of Napoleon's successful antagonists took part."

A few days later, a great concert was given by Saliéri, the director of the Imperial chapel, which Marie-Louise, her father and her young sisters attended. She was present also at the dress rehearsal of the brilliant tournament which was held in the great riding-school attached to the palace.

We will let the Baron de Bausset, who witnessed this fête, describe it in his own words.

"The riding-school was a long parallelogram, and at each end of the building a commodious stand was erected, one for the sovereigns, and the other for the orchestras. The two side galleries contained several rows of seats for guests. In a reserved row, facing the sovereigns and in front of the musicians, solemnly sat twenty-four ladies. These were represented by the same number of knights who were about to enter the arena, each prepared to prove in combat that his particular dame was the fairest of the fair.

"The sovereigns arrived in procession at nine o'clock. . . . Then, heralded by a flourish of trumpets, the twenty-four knights entered the lists in magnificent costumes, and mounted on splendid and richly caparisoned horses. This gorgeous cavalcade advanced, the knights making obeisance to the sovereigns and, turning round, performing the same homage to the ladies whose colours and scarves they wore. Games and combats then commenced, and followed in rotation. The usual competitions, such as tilting at the ring, cleaving dummy

heads and javelin exercises, were performed with remarkable accuracy.

"This portion of the entertainment lasted about an hour, and was followed by military evolutions, marches and counter-marches, ending with an equestrian quadrille, which gave the knights an opportunity of displaying all the skill and resource of accomplished horsemen. . . . During this gay revel the twenty-four ladies remained seated like immovable goddesses, content to be admired. Decked with diamonds, precious stones and pearls of immense size, to which their purple velvet robes added brilliancy, they presented a beautiful picture for all eyes to behold.

"At the conclusion of the tournament the sovereigns retired, and each knight, claiming his lady, conducted her to the banqueting-hall."

It will thus be seen that there was much merriment at Vienna at this time. If it was not a tournament, a *chasse*, or a sledging party, it would be *tableaux vivants*, in which the most distinguished members of the Court reproduced in statuesque attitudes various celebrated

scenes, such as the Tent of Darius, or the Assembly of the Gods of Olympus and Parnassus. Sufficient to say that by the month of November, according to Bausset, thirty millions of francs had already been spent in entertaining the sovereigns and members of the Congress.

On her return to Schœnbrünn, Marie-Louise resumed the life of earlier days. The etiquette as to dress was anything but strict—indeed "the Court breakfasted and dined, as it were, booted and spurred—that is, ready for a ride or anything else that might be suggested. Excursions, occasional visits, billiards, music were the principal occupations of this homely country life.

Tuesdays and Saturdays were set apart for the reception of guests, as the Empress liked to be free for the remainder of the week. She left Schœnbrünn nearly every day at about one o'clock to visit her father, and was sometimes accompanied by her son.

The young prince was only taken to see the Empress of Austria on great occasions, such as fête-days and birthdays, for, truth to tell, it was

only her father, the Emperor, and her sisters who really treated Marie-Louise and her son with genuine kindness. The rest of the family failed to take that interest in the child which his age and his position might have claimed. The Empress of Austria and her brothers-in-law went so far as to suggest that he should be made a bishop; a proposal which the Emperor found it more than once necessary to suppress.

Towards the end of October a very valuable consignment arrived at the Palace of Schœnbrünn. It consisted of the magnificent gifts of the town of Paris on the occasion of the birth of the little king: namely the King of Rome's beautiful cradle, a silver-gilt mirror, a gold dressing-case set, including an oval looking-glass surrounded by cupids. These *objets d'art* had been carefully packed and sealed in the Imperial store-rooms by Court officials in the presence of M. Ballouhey. A detachment of gendarmes had escorted the carriages containing them as far as Kehl, where some Austrian grenadiers took charge of them to their destination.

History does not relate the impression made on the Empress by the sight of these souvenirs. We shall, however, see that later on at Parma she did not hesitate to raise money on a portion of these costly presents, which should surely have reminded her of joyful days when everything justified the belief in a happy future.

During a visit which Marie-Louise paid on December 2 to the Empress of Russia at the Burg palace, a number of idlers loitering about her carriage were scandalized at seeing that she had "retained the Imperial arms on the panels of the doors and on the buttons of the servants' liveries." They even went so far as to make loud and very disagreeable remarks on the subject. From that time the arms were removed, the cyphers on the buttons were changed to M.L. and, in order to make a complete alteration in the appearance of the liveries, the dark green collars of the coats were replaced by others of "bleu Marie-Louise."

It did not cost the ex-Empress much to obliterate anything that might recall either the light of other days or remind her of the

Emperor. She was in love with Neipperg, and "no longer even took the trouble to hide her strange infatuation for this man," to whom there is little doubt she now belonged both body and soul.

During their frequent rides and drives together they would sometimes stop for a while at a farm, or rest under a clump of trees to admire the landscape. On these occasions they would refresh themselves with the "milk and household bread supplied by some neighbouring cottage." The romance of this dreamy, rural life, with its occasional homely cottage fare of bread and milk and its opportunities for the unhindered exchange of loving words, had a peculiar poetical charm for Marie-Louise, and would have been a subject not unworthy of an idyll by Gessner or a pastoral by Florian. That she was now perfectly happy is shown by the "good spirits and cheerfulness which she displayed at this time."

Now that Neipperg had become master both of the mind and the heart of the Empress, she ceased to correspond with Napoleon. On

October 10, 1814, the monarch of the Island of Elba, driven to desperation by this silence, the cause of which he did not even suspect, made up his mind to appeal to Ferdinand III, Grand Duke of Tuscany, his wife's uncle, and godfather to the King of Rome, who had been a friend in the days of his glorious prosperity. It was a favour that he was about to ask of the former member of the Confederation of the Rhine: "My very dear brother and uncle," wrote Napoleon from Porto-Ferrajo, "not having received any news of my wife since August 10, nor of my son for the last six months, I am sending the Chevalier Colonna with this letter to you. I beg your Royal Highness to inform me whether I may be allowed to send a weekly letter to the Empress through you, and whether you would be good enough to forward to me in the same manner news of the Empress and the letters of Madame la Comtesse de Montesquiou, my son's governess. I dare hope that, notwithstanding the events which have altered the sentiments of so many persons towards myself, your Royal

Highness still retains some slight friendship for me, and if you would give a formal assurance of it, it would afford me great consolation. In this case I would beg of your Royal Highness to bestow your favour on this little island which shares the affection which Tuscany bears to you.

"Let me assure your Royal Highness that my known feelings for you remain unchanged, and I trust you will believe in the high esteem and consideration in which I hold you. Let me also ask you to be kind enough to remember me to your children."

The Grand Duke of Tuscany was careful not to answer this communication. The letter was forwarded to Vienna, where it was opened by the Emperor of Austria, who communicated the contents of it to the members of the Congress. Marie-Louise, also, sent no reply.

Napoleon, having been warned that the secrecy of his letters was not respected, and that "the Empress had been forbidden to reply to them, ceased writing to her."

Marie-Louise was, however, too much occupied with other matters to think of corresponding

with the Emperor. Notwithstanding her rides with Neipperg, billiards, music, and the visits which were supposed "to occupy so much of her time," she found leisure to resume her painting, which the presence of Isabey at Vienna enabled her to do. This clever artist had come to the Austrian capital to paint the portraits of the sovereigns at a sitting of the Congress. He snatched a few hours every week in order to continue with the Empress the lessons from which she had derived so much benefit in former days. It must be remembered that this Archduchess was but a "bourgeoise" of simple tastes.

Overcoming her innate distaste for work, she sometimes consented to attend to the reports of General Neipperg, or of the minister responsible for the administration of the Duchies of Parma when he came to Vienna for that purpose.

General Neipperg on one occasion read to her a very important memorandum written by himself, to which she appeared to listen with particular attention. It consisted of political and

military problems with regard to Italy, in which the writer showed himself to be more inspired by the political maxims of Themistocles than by the virtuous principles of Aristides. This document, drawn up by one who had persistently accused Napoleon of being actuated by criminal ambition, was greatly in favour of Austria and equally unjust. The purpose of Count Neipperg's memorandum was the adoption of a federal system which would, after a time, subject Italy entirely to the domination of Austria by completely abolishing all the small principalities which were not under the rule of the princes of the house of Austria."

We shall see by the following letter to her "chère Victoire" that Marie-Louise, in search of fresh amusement, had taken to "playing the guitar," in which, according to her own admission, she did not excel. "You will exclaim," she writes, "'What, more accomplishments!' But their number, I assure you, remains the same; for as soon as I take up one thing, I drop another, and this time it is drawing that has given place to the guitar."

Thanks to these accomplishments, Marie-Louise was never bored. "I am happy," she adds, "in my little corner, where I see a great deal of my son, who grows better-looking every day, as well as more charming. I have never known him so fresh and well."

Nevertheless his health was the cause of more than one scare during the winter. "He has suffered a little from his teeth, which made him very irritable;" then again, in the month of December, he had "a very bad cold, with slight fever, and as croup was prevalent" the Empress at once "imagined that he would be a victim to the epidemic." She also "fretted without cause—a pardonable weakness where a mother is concerned." Marie-Louise did not devote herself solely to painting and music—she also gave literary parties at Schœnbrünn.

There was much talk at that time in Vienna respecting a preacher, the Abbé Werner who, before taking Holy Orders, was acknowledged to be one of the foremost poets in Germany. His tragedies, *Luther*, *Attila*, *Cunégonde* (a drama in twelve acts!), *Le fils de la Vallée*,

La Croix sur la Baltique (in which the principal character is a ghost), had attained such popularity in the fashionable world that Neipperg, who was always in search of some new interest for the Empress, was prompted to give her the pleasure of hearing this celebrated man, who by the power of his extraordinary eloquence was able in the morning to arouse enthusiasm from the pulpit, and in the evening obtain the same result by the performance of his productions in the theatres. More than once did the conscience of this emotional priest who from having been a Lutheran had become a Roman Catholic, compel him to anathematize the tragedies he himself had written. This did not, however, deter the managers from continually producing his dramas in their theatres. The poet-priest, now looked upon as a second Schiller, was summoned by Neipperg to Schœnbrünn.

At the request of the Empress, the Abbé read to her his tragedy, *Cunégonde*, "in a subdued and sombre voice, with many expressive gestures, and with an air of inspiration which, com-

L'Abbé Werner.

bined with his pale and ascetic countenance, gave him the appearance of a fanatic."

Bausset, who was present, says that as far as he was concerned, notwithstanding the explanatory gesticulations and the facial expressions of the author, which seemed even more tragic than the twelve acts of his tragedy, "he did not understand a single word of what he said."

Since the month of February the health of Mme. de Brignole had become much worse. The most eminent doctors in Vienna were called in, but not one of them was able to diagnose the malady from which she was suffering. Dr. Hereau, the Empress's medical attendant, "attributed the dreadful pain that she suffered to acute internal rheumatism." No remedy was of the slightest use, and the Countess was soon obliged to take to her bed.

M. de Bausset was also laid up by an obstinate attack of gout, accompanied, as usual, by pain, dyspepsia and irritability. He lacked the philosophy of Montaigne, who bore the same complaint with such fortitude, consoling himself with the knowledge that many famous men had

died of it, and that it was an illness which would sooner attack men of genius than those of inferior intellect.

Marie-Louise had also troubles of a different kind. In spite of the formal stipulations of Article V of the Treaty of Fontainebleau, Talleyrand, in agreement with the Spanish plenipotentiary, the Marquis de Labrador, desired to take the Duchies of Parma, Piacenza and Guastala from her in order to restore them to the Infanta Marie-Louise of Spain, widow of Prince Louis of Parma. As compensation, they proposed that the ex-Empress should take the Bavaro-Palatine estates which the King of Bavaria then possessed in Bohemia, and from which he received an annual income of 400,000 florins. In addition, she was to have the principality of Lucca, to revert, at her death, to the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

The European plenipotentiaries, however, had not taken into account the stubborn obstinacy of Marie-Louise who, no doubt, thinking that Lucca was too near the Island of Elba, preferred to reign in Parma; nor did they foresee

the earnest support which she would receive from Neipperg, who naturally took the cause of his Imperial mistress very much to heart.

He advised Marie-Louise to invoke the protection of the Czar Alexander, who, with his generous and chivalrous nature, received the Empress's petition with favour.

For his part, Neipperg made the most of his influence with Metternich, drawing up statements and ardently pleading the Empress's cause with that statesman. He also took steps to win over Lord Castlereagh, from whom he received every assurance of sympathy.

Marie-Louise eventually obtained the duchy, the object of her prayers, but the price exacted for the throne of Parma was that she should give up her child, that he should not inherit from his mother, and that at her death the reversion should be to the Infant Don Charles Louis and his descendants male. The Empress was induced to accept this compact in the belief that the companionship of Neipperg at Parma would more than compensate for her enforced separation from her son.

While these sinister machinations of diplomacy were in progress, the festivities continued without cessation. On the evening of March 6, 1815, there was an entertainment at Court—another representation of tableaux vivants, then the fashion of the day. The principal scene—the gem of the evening—represented a meeting of Maximilian I with Mary of Burgundy, after the picture of Petter, a Viennese artist. "The most beautiful women of the Court, the Duchesse de Sagan, the Comtesse de Fuchs, the Duchesse de Dino, etc., excited, one after the other, the admiration of the spectators who sought to identify in each succeeding tableau the fair representatives of the various parts. The air of revelry had to a certain extent set etiquette at defiance."

The audience marvelled at the beauty of the performers, and an atmosphere of seductive mirth seemed to fill the great halls of the palace. "Of a sudden a dull murmur was heard," and spread like magic. . . . *He has left the Island of Elba!* In a second, Maximilian and Mary of Burgundy, the bishop, the ladies, the knights,

the grand mistress, all became violently excited and, oblivious of their rôles in the tableau, advanced to the front of the stage to question the audience : *He embarked on the 28th of last month.—But who ?—Bonaparte ?—It is impossible !* Such were the questions and answers heard on all sides. The performance was immediately stopped. Had a thunderbolt struck the theatre it could not have caused greater terror.

All mirth and rejoicing ceased at once, and the joyous sounds of festivities gave way to cries of revenge on " the disturber of the world " who, with audacious insolence, had again dared to defy the power of the united sovereigns.

The news of the Emperor's landing at Cannes reached Vienna by special messenger on March 7 at four o'clock in the morning.

Prince Metternich's valet at once proceeded to call his master, who, however, simply glanced at the address of the despatch and, placing it on a table beside him, went to sleep again without misgiving. At about seven o'clock he broke the seal. . . . He instantly hurried to the

Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, and by eleven o'clock messengers were galloping in every direction with orders for the Allied Armies to return at once. These Armies were at that moment on the march home to their respective countries, whereas Napoleon was about to rejoin in his own country thousands of men ready to do all and risk all in his cause.

It was Neipperg who, on their return from riding at Schœnbrünn, broke to Marie-Louise the news that Napoleon had made his escape from Elba. It is not difficult to imagine the line he suggested the ex-Empress should take.

The Archduke John was positively brutal on the subject, when discussing it with his niece, exclaiming: "My dear Louise, I am so sorry for you, and what I wish, both for your sake and ours, is that he may break his neck." In comparison with such language, the tactful words of Neipperg could but add to the persuasive power he already exercised over the Empress, and the day was passed at Schœnbrünn as usual, with billiards and music after dinner.

On the following day, the news having

spread, some of the French servants were heard to cry, "Long live the Emperor!" on learning which, Neipperg threatened to have them hanged. As a matter of fact he simply sent them to the frontier, and he begged Mme. de Montesquiou, the young Prince's governess, not to mention what had occurred.

The news from France had been withheld from Mme. de Brignole, for fear that, owing to her devotion to the Emperor, the shock might prove fatal, so critical was her condition at the time. She was then considered to be *in extremis*, and Mme. de Montesquiou had prevailed on her to consent to receive the last sacrament. At three o'clock in the afternoon of March 11, the Empress, accompanied by a portion of her Court, repaired to the chapel of the castle, where she and each member of her following was given a lighted candle. They all then in procession followed the priest who was bearing the Sacred Elements to the sick chamber. All knelt at the foot of the bed of this kindly woman, whose devotion had been as touching as it was deep and sincere. She had left her

country to join the Court of the Emperor, and was still at this supreme moment ignorant of the intense excitement which then pervaded Europe. Her pious demeanour and calm resignation added solemnity to the service and, notwithstanding her being on the point of death, she displayed a calmness of mind and power of attention which concealed the gravity of her condition.

It was during this visit that Marie-Louise, "in a low and peremptory voice, ordered Count Neipperg to go and finish a letter" to Metternich, the purport of which was "that she had been absolutely ignorant of the Emperor Napoleon's intentions, and that she placed herself entirely under the protection of the Allies.

This declaration, which was at once brought to the knowledge of the sovereigns and their plenipotentiaries assembled in Congress, was evidently looked upon by them as a desire on her part that they should not hesitate to issue their manifesto against the Emperor.

This manifesto was the famous declaration of March 13, in which the husband of Marie-

Louise was likened to a criminal and placed beyond the pale of nations.

General Neipperg received his reward, for he was appointed "Maréchal de la Cour," a post which included the privilege of occupying the same carriage as the Archduchess.[1]

Now that the ex-Empress had become the accomplice of her jailers, the rulers of Europe no longer permitted the King of Rome to be surrounded by people devoted to Napoleon.

On March 18, Marie-Louise, on her return from Vienna where she had left her son with

[1] H. Houssaye, p. 451. It was evident that diplomacy left no stone unturned in order to make Neipperg's influence over Marie-Louise paramount, and Metternich could but congratulate himself on possessing a puppet so obedient to his wishes: "I feel sure that the relations now existing between him (Neipperg) and the Princess (Marie-Louise) can but lead to good results, as he has established such complete ascendency over her that she dare not move without the advice of her friend. Moreover the Comte's character is a guarantee that he will never tender any advice that would not coincide with the wishes of her august father." Report (translated from the German) of the police commissary Göhausen, Vienna, March 27, 1815, quoted by Edouard Wertheimer (*Der Herzog von Reichstadt*), p. 148, note vi.

her father the Emperor, unceremoniously dismissed Mme. de Montesquiou who, in spite of all her prayers and protestations against such summary treatment, was forced to submit. But before she left the young Prince, on whom she had lavished the most loving and devoted care, she demanded, "besides the written order from the Emperor that the child was to be given up, a medical certificate to the effect that she left the young Prince in perfect health."

When he was taken out of the hands of Mme. de Montesquiou, Napoleon's heir was placed in charge of an Austrian governess, the widow of General Mitrowski, *née* Baronne de Montfault, and the wife of Count Scarampi, a *Piedmontese* gentleman. This, however, was but a provisional arrangement, as the new governess was soon to be appointed a lady-in-waiting to the Empress.

Mme. de Brignole was now at the point of death. The day before she passed away, Mme. de Montesquiou, thinking it her duty to do so, informed her of the events then taking place in France, which news, according to Bausset,

brought a gleam of light to the beautiful face of the dying woman, who breathed her last, offering up a prayer for Napoleon's success. Her remains were laid to rest in the Hitzing cemetery, next to the grave of another faithful servant of the monarchy, Cléry, the valet, who had witnessed the sufferings and death of the prisoner of the Temple.

V

MARIE-LOUISE AND NEIPPERG IN 1815

WHILE Napoleon, in breach of his word, was making his escape from Elba, Italy became the scene of wild and unnecessary excitement. Murat suddenly left Naples with 50,000 men and made an unexpected descent on the Austrians, in order to create a diversion in favour of Bonaparte.

General Neipperg received orders to join the Austrian army and oppose Murat. He therefore left Schœnbrünn on April 1, after taking a touching farewell of Marie-Louise. They promised to write to each other and, indeed, during their short separation, a correspondence was carried on between the Empress and the General, which showed that he, at any rate, was deeply in love. "His letters, which sometimes consisted of eight to ten pages," were, so to speak, records of his daily life; and

Marie-Louise, in her solitude at Schœnbrünn, anxiously awaited their arrival, for they were the sole joy and pleasure of her life. Suddenly Neipperg ceased to write and Marie-Louise was distraught with anxiety. She wrote to her "chère Victoire": "The General has not given me signs of life for the last eighteen days!" Eighteen days seemed a century to the forgetful wife, who had long since given up writing to her husband.[1]

[1] Marie-Louise was inconsolable. On July 28, 1816, she wrote in German from Baden to her father: "I beg you also, my dear Papa, to allow General Neipperg to return here and remain with me, after he has taken his troops to their destination. He will be most useful in my household; besides, I have confidence in him, and I should like to have some one from here (einen Hiesigen) with me, as I do not wish to make new acquaintances. I wrote to him a few days ago and he is quite ready to give up the diplomatic service, if you order him to do so." Quoted by Edouard Wertheimer, *Der Herzog von Reichstadt*, p. 218, note 5.

It is a curious fact that almost on the very day when Marie-Louise complains of the General's silence, Neipperg expresses his anxiety at not hearing from the Empress—

(Under cover to la Baronne Mitrowsky at Schœnbrünn.)

"Sinigaglia, May 2, 1815. I have received no news

Murat, who a year before had been seduced from his loyalty by Neipperg, was now endea-

---

from your Imperial Majesty since the 17th of this month. This makes me very anxious, as I gathered from the last news your Majesty was good enough to send me regarding your health, that it was not quite what it should be. I tremble when I think of anything disagreeable happening to your Majesty, whose extreme kindness and angelic nature deserve nothing but happiness, and I pray God daily, even in the heat of battle, for the well-being of your Majesty. Your Majesty does not tell me whether you ride much, and if so, with whom.

"I shall always be delighted to hear even the smallest details as to life at Schœnbrünn at the present time. . . . I have not seen a pianoforte since I left Schœnbrünn; music, like everything else, is now laid aside. Have you any news of the Duchess, and have you not received any threat or suggestion from that direction? I tremble when I think of it, although I know your Majesty's character too well to dare to think that it would be possible for you to give way. Your Majesty will always do very well if you are only guided by your own opinions. This is the best and safest advice that I can give, for I think that there is nobody in the world who knows you as well as I do, and who is in a better position to admire your virtues and your firmness in very critical moments. 'Tout ira bien, fiance en Dieu.' This is my family motto, in which I have blind confidence, which is not saying much for a man with one eye. Your Majesty could not render me more happiness than by writing as often as pos-

vouring to emulate in Italy the deeds of his brother-in-law, Napoleon. But Neipperg was destined to complete his ruin, and bring about his absolute defeat in the field of battle.

In addition it was the good fortune of Neipperg to give further proof of his zeal and courage, as will be seen in the desperate engagement which followed. Murat had left Naples on March 17, and was moving with 40,000 men towards Northern Italy.

Two days later he was at Ancona, and thence marched to Bologna, where the populace received him with acclamation, and he pushed on to the very gates of Piacenza.

At Parma he refused the conditions which the Austrians still offered him. But Nugent had received reinforcements and Joachim, after a sanguinary fight, was compelled to retire on Florence. There was nothing left for him but retreat.

General Neipperg took the small town of

---

sible. Firing has commenced at my outposts. I am going to join them on Cortez, my favourite horse." Quoted by Auguste Fournier, appendix, p. 39.

Forlimpoli by assault and obliged the King of Naples to fall back on Cesena, then on Savignano and Rimini. Arriving at Tolentino on May 2, Murat resolved to risk an engagement. In front of him was General Bianchi with the bulk of the Austrian army. The battle was sanguinary and long, and the king-general would perhaps have won it, had not Neipperg with 1600 men and twenty guns arrived and put the Neapolitan army to flight. Murat's troops deserted in thousands.[1] On arrival at Capua Joachim left the remains of his army with Baron de Carascosa and, losing his head, returned to Naples and presented himself to his wife, saying: "Madam, I sought death—but in vain."

[1] "On May 12, at Aquila, Neipperg, who had been entrusted with a diplomatic mission in addition to his military command, received a letter from Metternich, authorizing him to offer the King of Naples an annual income of a million florins if he would, of his own accord, renounce his throne. It was, however, understood that before acting Neipperg was to discuss the subject with the General commanding in chief. The two Generals agreed not to offer their enemy anything, seeing that his overthrow was a foregone conclusion." *Helfert*, p. 66.

The next day a small boat conveyed him to the Island of Ischia, whence a merchant vessel landed him in three days on the coast of France, almost at the very place where his brother-in-law Napoleon had himself so lately disembarked.

At two o'clock in the morning, on May 22, Neipperg entered Naples with two regiments of cavalry and a battery of artillery.[1] His

[1] Notwithstanding the many proofs of courage and skill which Neipperg had given in this last campaign, it would seem from a letter of Metternich's, recently commented on by M. Auguste Fournier, that the Austrian minister seemed anything but satisfied with the General's diplomacy after the battle of Tolentino. "Murat," he wrote, "had been finally driven back to the walls of Naples, where Bianchi and Neipperg, in the presence of an English general, Lord Burghersh, signed with Carascosa and Colleta a military convention on May 20, by which the King, whose title would no longer be recognized, was bound to evacuate the capital and fortresses." Metternich was not satisfied with this. In a report of May 31 to the Emperor Francis he reproached the negotiators, especially that diplomat Neipperg, for having negotiated in the name of the allies in the case of a purely Austrian military success. They would have obtained more, he added, had they refused any capitulation and had then taken the King prisoner or, at any rate, forced him to abdicate. The Emperor agreed with him. "What has

sojourn there was, however, of very brief duration.

At the conclusion of this short campaign he was sent to the south of France with his division in order to take up the government of the departments of Gard, Ardèche and Hérault. It was now that his energy, tolerance and moderation enabled him to solve problems more difficult for a soldier than mere acts of heroism. Although he was in command of an army of Catholics, he protected the Protestants from the tyranny of the rival church, and succeeded in reconciling the two hitherto irreconcilable parties. He displayed so much suavity, moderation and justice in his dealings with the people that, in token of their gratitude, and prompted by a unanimous impulse, they actually erected floral triumphal arches in his honour.

---

happened is another proof of how little soldiers are fitted for carrying out negotiations, and cause me to have serious doubts as to Neipperg's capabilities. In any case he appears to me to have acted very imprudently in undertaking important matters without having any aptitude for negotiation." Appendix, p. 34.

But we must return to Schœnbrünn. Some days after the departure of General Neipperg M. Montrand, known to be on the best of terms with Talleyrand, arrived at Vienna. He was the bearer of a letter from Caulaincourt to Méneval, as also of a note from Napoleon to Marie-Louise, in which the Emperor expressed a hope that she would soon rejoin him with their son. Méneval, to whom the Empress's feelings were well known and who was quite aware that she would forward the note, without even reading it, to the Emperor of Austria, decided to burn it, having first consulted Mme. de Montesquiou on the subject. He wrote a long letter to the Duc de Vicences, describing the "principal events of the Empress's sojourn" at Schœnbrünn. But as he did not dare say everything he merely ended his letter in the following manner: "The ex-Empress is really very good, but under the influence of foreigners."

Méneval—we repeat—did not dare tell the whole truth. Let us here quote the words of that high-minded, conscientious author, Imbert

de Saint-Amand: "This loyal servant, the soul of honour and fidelity, left no stone unturned in order to bring Marie-Louise back to the paths of duty. The journal which he kept at Schœnbrünn in 1814 and 1815 was shown to me by his son. It is a very curious document, and contains nothing but facts without comment, after the style of the diary of Dangeau. But by reading between the lines one is completely enlightened as to the position Marie-Louise had taken up as well as to her mode of life. General Neipperg's name occurs continually in this diary. The Empress's daily occupations are very much the same: a ride with the General, dinner with the General, music with the General, and, indeed, the mention of the General's name is monotonously frequent. I am not sure that his influence over Marie-Louise was not more powerful from afar than when he was at her side. On April 1, 1815, we find the following entry: 'The General left this morning at six o'clock and the Empress, who had risen and dressed early, was only informed of his departure by a long letter

which he desired to be handed to her.' Here is another entry on April 21: 'The Empress has received a long letter from General Neipperg, dated Modena, April 14. As the soldiers forming the body-guard at Parma refused to march against the Neapolitans and, as moreover, some of them had the audacity to shout "Long live the Emperor," they have been disbanded. The Empress is looking forward to reward, on her arrival at Parma, those who remained loyal.' Thus it will be seen that what Marie-Louise actually desired most was, that the soldiers of her Duchy should declare against her husband. When on May 2 the unfortunate Murat who, as Napoleon said, had twice led to the undoing of France—the first time by deserting her, and the second by returning to her too quickly—was beaten completely at Tolentino by the Austrians, the person who most rejoiced at General Neipperg's success was the Empress Marie-Louise."

Marie-Louise had now renounced France for ever. The religious processions, organized with a view to intercession for the successful

issue of the war against Napoleon, commenced on April 16 and lasted four days. Long lines of young men and maidens, singing hymns and bearing flags and banners of all colours, paraded the streets and suburbs of the capital.

The processions visited all the churches. The court did not fail to be present at these ceremonies, and the Empress of Austria endeavoured to persuade Marie-Louise to join her prayers with those of her family, imploring Almighty God to crush her husband. She had, however, the decency not to accede to so humiliating a request. Méneval, who mentions the incident, feels bound to add that "she apparently only made this concession in order to justify her refusal to return to France."

These processions and prayers were brought to a conclusion by a sermon delivered by the famous Abbé Werner, whom we have already noticed as reciting poetry at Schœnbrünn. In this homily the eloquent Abbé took up the cause of "Germany and the German language against the encroachments which France and her language were making in society." Adding

mysticism to his invectives against France he, "in this pompous, empty, paradoxical discourse, endeavoured to prove his case by pointing out that the last words uttered by Jesus Christ on the Cross, 'Eli, Eli, lama Sabachthani' were not Greek or Latin, the languages of the country in which He died, but were those of His mother tongue, and this," he added, "was the true example to follow, etc. . . ." The above extract enables us to appraise the hysterical mind of this poet, and the merits of his sermon which, however, seems to have greatly impressed those who heard it.

About this time the news of the death of Madame Neipperg on April 23 reached Schœnbrünn. Thérèse Pola, a beauty in her day, had remained in Würtemberg while her husband, Neipperg, as unscrupulous as he was ambitious, was exercising his machiavellian talents in Vienna.

She died after a short illness, leaving four sons. The death of her first husband had taken place but a few days before her own. One evening at dinner, Marie-Louise herself

announced the death of the General's wife, and the casual manner in which she did so showed how little grief the sad intelligence had caused her.

Méneval, probably the most faithful and devoted member of the suite which had accompanied the Empress to Vienna, began now to feel that his presence at Schœnbrünn was no longer required, and therefore requested that his passports might be given to him for his return to France. He was, however, very anxious before leaving to have a last interview with Napoleon's son, whom he had not seen for six weeks. When he did so, the beautiful fair-haired boy did not run forward to meet him as was his custom, but "received him almost as if he were a stranger." When Méneval asked whether he had any messages for his father, the child was at first silent, then gently disengaging his hand from that of his father's devoted servant he, without saying a word, retired to the recess of one of the farthest windows, and when Méneval then approached in order to bid him farewell, the boy, touched

by the old man's emotion, beckoned him to the window and whispered in a sad voice: "Monsieur *Meva*, please tell him that I love him still."

It was at ten o'clock on the evening of May 6 that Méneval, that noble character whose name will be inscribed in the annals of fidelity and devotion, took his last leave of the Empress. Marie-Louise could not help betraying some emotion. She told him "that she felt that all relations between her and France were about to cease for ever, but that she would always cherish a happy remembrance of that country of her adoption." She desired Méneval, whose devotion had been so great in evil days, "to assure the Emperor that she wished him well and to endeavour to make him understand the sadness of her position," and the necessity for a separation which would not, however, "in any way affect the feelings of esteem and gratitude which she bore him." She gave the faithful secretary, who was about to leave, never to set eyes on her again, a snuff-box with her monogram in diamonds as a

souvenir, and then hurriedly withdrew in order to hide the feelings of emotion which she could no longer restrain." On the following morning at six o'clock Méneval left Schœnbrünn escorted by an Austrian captain named Karatzaï, who accompanied him as far as Basle.

While the nations were rushing to arms in order once more to engage in sanguinary conflicts—conflicts destined to be so fruitful in historic results—Marie-Louise was boring herself to death at Schœnbrünn, for Neipperg was no longer there to cater for her amusement. The ex-Empress, always in pursuit of excitement and pleasure, made up her mind to go to Baden, about three leagues from Schœnbrünn, in order to take part in the distractions of that aristocratic suburb. The Baronne du Montet, who was staying at that watering-place at the same time, had opportunities of seeing a great deal of Marie-Louise. She tells us that she thought her "pretty, as fresh as a rose, with a beautiful figure," and that she was much struck by the excessive luxury in which the Arch-

duchess indulged. She also records in her interesting *Souvenirs* how careless and listless was her daily life. At about six or seven in the morning the ex-Empress rang for her maids, whom she called "Amarantes" on account of the colour of their dresses. She then asked for her desk, and wrote her letters in bed until about ten o'clock, when she rose. "Her morning and evening costumes were exquisite." Her maids lavished so much care and ingenuity on their production that they were veritable works of art. She breakfasted at eleven, after which she spent considerable time in drawing and playing the piano or guitar. In the afternoon she went out riding, dressed in a neat habit with a flowing scarf round her waist, and she greatly enjoyed the excitement of galloping over the roughest ground she could find—the danger thus incurred adding to her pleasure. One day the Baronne du Montet went to High Mass at Baden. Suddenly, in the middle of the service, a bustling noise was heard at the door of the church, caused by police officers pushing back the crowd in order to clear a

passage for Marie-Louise. "She was dressed all in pink, and over this pink under-dress she wore a robe and spencer made of beautiful lace. Her hat was also pink, and trimmed with feathers of the same colour. M. de Bausset, dressed in black, and with an angry frown on his countenance, walked in front of her, and she was followed by a servant carrying a huge silken bag containing her prayer-book. "The congregation was scandalized by her arrival in the middle of High Mass and by the noise made by the police, especially as the service she came to attend only lasted ten minutes. Such conduct was most unlike what they were accustomed to expect from the Austrian Imperial family."

The above, however, is but a trifling episode, and the Baronne du Montet has recorded in her *Souvenirs* an incident more worthy of note illustrating the selfishness and heartlessness of Marie-Louise's nature.

"Bonaparte was a prisoner, and the news of this event had just arrived." The Baronne du Montet went at once to Mme. Scarampi, lady-in-waiting to the ex-Empress. One would have

thought that this lady would at that moment have been with her mistress endeavouring to console her on the receipt of such sad intelligence. Instead of which, Mme. du Montet found her skipping, singing, etc., "for very joy at the tidings" of Napoleon's capture.

When Mme. Scarampi became a little calmer, Mme. du Montet asked whether Marie-Louise had heard the news. "I am now going to write it to her," was the answer, "as the Empress sees no one till eleven o'clock." She then sat down and wrote to the Archduchess.

"We waited for the answer with much impatience and curiosity," adds the Baronne du Montet, "and here it is, word for word: 'Thank you, I had already heard the news you sent me. I want to ride to Merkenstein; do you think the weather is fine enough to risk it?'" This event, which Marie-Louise treated so lightly, was no less than Napoleon's embarkation on board the *Bellerophon*—in fact, his first step on the way to exile. The general state of affairs which at this time was shaking Europe to its very foundations, had not the slightest effect on Marie-

Louise. She had no other thought than that of amusing herself.

After a stay of several weeks at Baden, she returned to Schœnbrünn. The coalition had demobilized their armies. Napoleon, a prisoner on board ship, was in mid-ocean, and for the second and last time was leaving the scenes of all his glory and nearing his place of exile.

The Empress's father was in Italy, busy taking possession of his new States, and Marie-Louise, alone with her son, was for a time spending a somewhat peaceful and monotonous life at Schœnbrünn. She rode and drove, and was occasionally seen in Vienna in her box at the theatre, attending first performances.

On December 12, her birthday was celebrated "by a charming concert." It was by way of being a surprise, although, in fact, she had "known of it" for some time.

The real surprise, however, of the day—and she tells us so herself—was the sudden arrival of Neipperg, who had covered the distance

between Venice and Schœnbrünn in three days and three nights.

This blustering lover returned, covered with laurels gained in the last Italian campaign, and, by means of his persuasive manner and speech, resumed his supreme influence over the Empress and her actions.

VI

MARIE-LOUISE, DUCHESS OF PARMA

THE Congress of Vienna had definitely placed her Majesty the Empress in possession of the Duchies of Parma, Piacenza and Guastalla.[1] These Duchies, bounded on the north by Lombardy, on the east by the Duchy of Modena, on the west by Piedmont, and on the south by the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, covered

[1] "The Empress will own and be sovereign of the Duchies of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla, excepting those portions which enter the States of His Imperial Majesty and Royal Highness on the left bank of the Pô.

"The reversion of these Duchies will be decided by agreement between the Courts of Austria, Russia, France, Spain, England and Prussia, always bearing in mind the rights of reversion of the House of Austria, and of H.M. the King of Sardinia, with regard to them." Article 99 of the Congress of Vienna.

In a protocol (apart from the Congress and dated March 28) it was agreed that the Duchies ceded to Marie-Louise should revert at her death to the Infant Don Carlos, son of H.M. Marie-Louise of Spain.

six thousand square kilometres, and contained the five districts of Parma, Piacenza, Guastalla, Borgotara, and Borgo San Donnino.

This region, originally occupied by the Romans who came to Piacenza to hide the disgrace of their defeats at Tessin and Trebbia, and invaded in the Middle Ages by barbarians, was united to the Duchy of Milan in 1346, only to be handed over to the Holy See.

In 1545 the Pope Paul III turned it into an hereditary duchy in favour of his natural son Pierre Louis, founder of the Farnese dynasty which became extinct in 1731. It then passed, by the union of Elizabeth Farnese with Philip V of Spain, to the Spanish Bourbons, Charles I her son, his brother Don Philip, and the son of the latter, Don Ferdinand de Bourbon.

Ceded to France, it was incorporated in the empire on July 21, 1805. On March 30, Napoleon made over the Duchy of Guastalla to his sister Pauline. At the same time he bestowed on the chancellor Cambacérès the title of Duke of Parma, but without any rights of

sovereignty, and on the grand treasurer Le Brun the title of Duke of Piacenza. These duchies in 1808 constituted the department of Taro.

When in 1814 the French retired from Italy, a force of 3,000 men was organized at Parma; it was, however, soon reduced to 1200. A company of National Carbineers, acting as gendarmes, maintained order in the interior of these States. These troops were placed under the orders of Colonel Bianchi, of Guastalla.

Since the treaty of April 11, 1814, which assured to Marie-Louise the possession of these duchies, the administration of their affairs had been left in the hands of Austrian agents, and when she entered into possession in the month of April 1816 they were found to be burdened with considerable debts, while at the same time many payments due were in arrears, and others were unlikely ever to be recovered.

The country was very fertile and rich in cereals, such as wheat, maize, rice, barley, etc., and there was an active trade in macaroni and other farinaceous foods as well as in grapes. There were two piano manufactories in Parma.

The inhabitants of the duchy amounted to about 450,000.

There is no doubt that the arrival of the Empress was looked forward to as the advent of a second Providence, for the people were convinced that it would put an end to the ills of the country, greatly impoverished and exhausted by a war which had lasted so long. But the principal reason for the flattering reception which they had prepared for her must be attributed to the fact that "she was Napoleon's wife."

On March 7 Marie-Louise started for Parma, accompanied by Neipperg, her first chamberlain, to whom she had relegated her authority, and by a numerous suite of Austrians and Italians.

They hastened the journey as far as the Venetian frontier, staying a few days in Verona, as the ex-Empress desired to be present incognita at a performance in the local theatre.

As soon, however, as she entered her box she was recognized by the audience, and shouts immediately arose from all sides of "Vive l'Impéra-

trice Marie-Louise!" "Vive Napoleon II!" In vain did the police endeavour to impose silence, and although the archduchess tried to conceal herself at the back of the box, the cries only became louder. Terrified, she left the theatre, but the people rushed into the passages and accompanied her to her residence, cheering her all the way.

It is certain that her stay at Verona, notwithstanding the attractions of her garden, with its soft, balmy air, had not been enjoyed by the ex-Empress. She said as much to her "dear" Victoire: "I have been," she writes, "more or less ill during my three weeks' stay at Verona."

On the other hand, at Venice, where she also stayed a short time, she was enchanted with her visit. The splendour of the sky, the fascination of the buildings and the sight of "so many lovely objects" combined to impress her with the idea of being wrapt in some beautiful dream.

After having revelled in the beauties of Venice, with its poetry, art and matchless atmosphere, the young sovereign continued her journey without stopping.

On April 19, 1816, Marie-Louise entered her States. She crossed the Pô near Castelmaggiore on a large bridge of boats which had been constructed for the occasion, and at the head of which the municipality of Parma had caused two triumphal pyramids to be erected.

She was received at the entrance of the bridge by the high authorities of the country, as also by the aristocracy and inhabitants who had hastened from all sides to be present. After the exchange of the usual compliments, Marie-Louise went to the château of Colorno, that magnificent building which had been the favourite residence of the last Duke of Parma; but she only remained there one night.

On the following day, April 20, 1816, she made her entry into Parma at three o'clock in the afternoon. In the carriage with her were the Comte de Neipperg, her first chamberlain, in a gorgeous costume embroidered with gold and covered with decorations, Count Magawli, her Minister of State, and the Comtesse Scarampi. She was followed by a procession of eighteen carriages containing her chamberlains

and the ladies of her Court. The clergy in full canonicals awaited her on the threshold of the ancient Roman cathedral with incense and holy water, and received her with expressions of profound loyalty and devotion.

The young sovereign, who was much touched, entered the holy edifice, of which the vaulted ceiling was the prominent feature, and she at once fell on her knees under the famous cupola painted by Correggio.

A solemn thanksgiving Te Deum was chanted, and at the same time rang out the peals from the belfries of the sixty churches of this small capital. At the conclusion of the ceremony the Duchess drove to the Ducal palace.

This ancient residence is of historical interest. It was built and inhabited by the Farneses, and was partially pulled down in 1766, with a view to its reconstruction on large and sumptuous proportions according to the designs of Petitot.

The foundations, however, had scarcely been laid, when the architect was suddenly instructed to stop all the works, and to improvise, out of

what still remained of the ancient half-demolished palace, accommodation suitable for the reception of Ferdinand and his wife Marie-Amélie on the occasion of their marriage in the month of June 1769.

Marie-Louise remained a few hours at the palace, and then drove through the town in an open carriage. In the evening she witnessed some beautiful fireworks "which caused even the stars to pale."

Neipperg at once applied himself to organize the household of the young sovereign. In addition to his position as first chamberlain, he allotted to himself the administration of the Court and the Ducal house, the ministry of foreign affairs, as also the direction of the military department. The appointments were as follows—

Private Secretary—Le Comte Scarampi.

Master of the Horse—Prince Soragna.

Governor of the Palace—The Comte dal Verme.

Chief Equerry—The Marquis de Bergonzi.

Great Chamberlain, Privy Councillor—The

Comte Stefano San Vitale, who had already taken up his duties at Vienna.

Grand Master of Ceremonies—The Comte Anguissola d'Altoë.

Four Chamberlains—The Marquis Paolucci-Calboli, the Marquis Bernardo Labatto, the Comte Federigo San Vitale, and the Comte Giuseppe Simonetta.

Lady-in-waiting—The Comtesse Scarampi.

Lady of the Court—The Comtesse Cavriani.

Four Ladies of the Palace—The Marquise de Soragna, the Marquise Bergonzi, the Comtesse Magawli, and the Comtesse Simonetta.

The State was administered by a Prime Minister, the Count Magawli who, however, only remained in office for one year.

The military household consisted of a body-guard, a guard of honour, and a company of halberdiers commanded by the Comte Borisi. The command of the town was confided to Lieut.-Colonel de Crotti.

At the same time, at the instigation of Neipperg, the Duchess founded the Order of Con-

stantine and St. George, of which there were five classes: the senators or bearers of the grand cross, the commanders, the "chevaliers de justice," etc., and the equerries. Marie-Louise was the Grand Mistress of this sacred order. The badge was a red enamelled cross on which were the initial letters of the ancient words —*In hoc signo vinces.* In the centre of the cross was the monogram of Christ, formed by the capital letters X and P,[1] with the Greek letters Alpha and Omega, signifying that the cross was the beginning and end of all things. A St. George on horseback overcoming the traditional dragon formed a pendant to the cross.

We can imagine that Marie-Louise, as she approached Parma, leaned her fair head on Neipperg's shoulder, whispering, "How happy our life will be here, and how much more free than at Schœnbrünn."

Neipperg was most anxious to make Marie-Louise happy, and with that view he had himself arranged the distribution of all the rooms.

His own was "separated from that of the Princess by one room only, which was occupied by a maid of honour—a young girl of about seventeen years of age," and "at night, after all had retired, the General locked the doors of this apartment, taking the keys away with him" —a convenient manner of securing peaceful and uninterrupted meetings between the Sovereign and her lover.

Neipperg, however, did not devote the whole of his time to the pursuit of his courtship and to the pretence of exaggerated passion. Uniting in himself the functions of Chamberlain, Minister, Field-Marshal, Knight of the Golden Fleece and Privy Councillor of the Emperor of Austria, he continued to fill the *rôle* at Parma which he had so successfully played at Vienna. He did everything in his power to distract the Duchess's mind from all reminiscences of the past. The police supervision was such that no petition could be submitted to the Sovereign, and no person could address her, except in his presence. In order to divert her mind from dwelling on the past glories of her husband, he

went so far as to send for numerous pamphlets inspired by hate and party-spirit in order to place the character of Napoleon in a false and evil light. These leaflets were read at the ducal palace.

What Austria especially feared, wrote M. Welschinger, "was the revival of hopes of empire. Certain poems in honour of Napoleon which were published at Parma caused Metternich great anxiety.

"On June 25 he wrote to Neipperg impressing upon him to beware of particular passages in them, the tendency of which could only be hurtful to public opinion, as they were likely to foster hopes for a condition of affairs which were now quite incompatible with the existing state of Europe."

He pointed out that the Court of Parma might, by tolerating such productions, expose itself to awkward complications "with those governments whose object it was to obliterate even a remembrance of a period which had become too memorable." It was impossible to be more devoted to legitimate monarchy than

was Metternich. Moreover, he was possessed by an exaggerated fear of anything Bonapartist. Thus, when he learnt that the Princess Borghese intended to spend a few weeks at the Lucca baths, he acquainted Neipperg of the fact, and begged him to arrange that Marie-Louise should not meet this princess, "insignificant a personage though she was," and that the Empress should refuse any request for an audience which she might make.

As a matter of fact the Duchess of Parma had not the slightest wish to see the Princess Borghese or any other member of the Imperial family.

Marie-Louise had heard on July 7 that Prince Louis Bonaparte was about to take up his abode at Leghorn. She hastened, therefore, to beg her uncle, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, to make him renounce the idea, for, according to her, his prolonged stay in that town "would make all Europe talk." She was suspected of political schemes and, in her position, she was obliged to be particularly cautious, especially in view of the future of her son, the being "in the whole

PRINCE METTERNICH.

world" she loved the most. She, perhaps, was able to persuade herself that she really entertained these sentiments of affection, but her private correspondence and the fact that she left Schœnbrünn, go far to show that these feelings were only imaginary.

Marie-Louise, on hearing that Lucien Bonaparte was at Genoa, again had recourse to the good offices of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, with a view to persuading the Prince not to remain there. "My father," she said, "strongly advised me to avoid any meeting *with the family*, and I have always found this advice so good that I am quite determined to follow it now. . . . All such visits to the coasts of the Mediterranean are quite enough to offend the Bourbons and to disturb the peace and quiet which I so much enjoy in the little State which I have been vouchsafed by fortune, and in which I am *absolutely happy*."

In truth Marie-Louise was perfectly content in her little duchy. But what she really loved in this beautiful country on the borders of Italy, which still recalled memories of Petrarch and

Laura,[1] was Neipperg, and him alone. This is proved by her private letters, from which we gather that, excepting for her love-affairs, Parma had no attractions for her. "Here," she writes, "I found everything in disorder and confusion on my arrival, and although I had been promised that I should be spared disagreeables, everything has been left for me to do. Society is nothing to speak of, and I take care to see as little of it as possible, contenting myself with the companionship of the few friends I brought with me . . . indeed, I am disgusted with life in general, and I assure you that every time I visit a convent I envy those who seek repose there, for the more I see of the world,

[1] "Tradition, which appears to be well founded, locates the site of his house and garden at Parma at the spot now occupied by the Maison Bergonzi, near the church of Saint Etienne. . . . There is a fine sarcophagus in memory of Petrarch in the chapel of Saint Agatha. He was archdeacon and canon of the Parma Cathedral as well as canon of Lombez and Padua. The ecclesiastical dignities are in curious contrast with the poetical reputation of the beautiful Laura's lover. . . . It was at Parma that Petrarch wrote the greater part of his *Africa*." *L'Italie*, by Hyp. Hostein. Audot, Paris, 1833.

the more I become sorrowfully convinced of its wickedness."

She also wrote to M. de Bausset that "society, there is none" at Parma, but that, luckily for her, she had "never been fond of going out. Indeed," she adds, "my sole wish is to spend my life quite quietly here, and I sincerely hope that this will be thoroughly understood in your country. My health is excellent; the Italian climate having greatly improved it. I also receive the best of news of my son, who grows rapidly." She then expresses herself as very well satisfied with the General, who has undertaken the arrangement of her establishment with all the "zeal and energy that friendship could suggest."

The tropical heat of the summer proved too much for Marie-Louise at Parma, so she made up her mind to spend the month of August with the General at Leghorn, where the temperature would be moderated by sea-breezes.

M. de Fontenay, the French *chargé d'affaires* at Florence, saw her on her arrival, and felt it his duty to express to the Duc de Richelieu his

anxiety with regard to the state of her health, in which he noticed a "great change," adding, however, that the Sovereign's illness did not prevent her appearing "nearly every day at the theatre" with her chamberlain.

Let us at once say that the pallor and general appearance of fatigue and ill-health of the Sovereign which had so much impressed our *chargé d'affaires* at Florence were caused by physiological troubles more easily diagnosed in a maternity hospital than at a French Consulate, and afforded ample proof that the relations of Marie-Louise with her chamberlain since their arrival at Parma had not been as innocent as could have been desired.

There is no doubt that Marie-Louise amused herself immensely at Leghorn, where there was no Court ceremonial to weary her, and where she was unfettered by the trammels of etiquette. She rode or drove with her favourite, saw the sights by day and visited the theatres "at night."

The daily baths which she took improved her health and appearance to such an extent

that she feared to return home "with a face like a full moon," which would be "most annoying," and she was never so happy as when remembering she was young, and forgetting that she was a sovereign.

She left Leghorn on August 18; but before returning to Parma, thought it would be pleasant to make a stay at Florence and Bologna in order to visit the museums and galleries of those towns, so rich in sculpture and painting.

Marie-Louise was entirely guided by Neipperg, who prepared a fresh programme of amusements for the young Sovereign every day. She was more in love than ever with her chamberlain, "who, according to M. de Fontenay, returned her devotion with a chivalrous and ardent love."

In the month of September, when the Duchess went to Bologna, she was the object of a demonstration which must have recalled her reception at Verona. About five hundred people surrounded her carriage, shouting, "Long live Napoleon the great! Long live his unhappy wife, the Empress, our Sovereign!"

These outbursts of enthusiasm, and this spontaneous reminder of the past, vexed the ex-Empress to such an extent that she escaped by means of a secret door from a museum which she happened to be visiting and hurriedly returned to her residence. The greatest proof of her profound dislike to any reminiscence of the Emperor is the brutal insolence with which she replied to this touching manifestation of sympathy: "This vile populace has prevented my visiting all that I wished to see in this town."

Vile populace indeed! Marie-Louise treated these poor people, showing their enthusiasm for the memory of the Emperor, as if they had been but ragamuffins, scoundrels and jail-birds. It is true that six of Napoleon's old retired officers who were living at Bologna had shouted, "Your husband, your husband!" at her carriage-door. Nor was the return journey without incident. "Knowing the road that she would take, more than three thousand people were waiting for her, determined to take the horses out of her carriage and to leave her alone on the high road, but the

police arranged for the arrival of an escort of cavalry, which enabled her to escape in the direction of Modena."

On September 12, Marie-Louise arrived at Colorno,[1] her summer residence. It had been the favourite abode of Ferdinand de Bourbon, and was a lovely spot, laid out in gardens and orchards, with a miniature lake on which swans and other water-fowl disported themselves. There were also extensive hothouses for tropical plants, and enclosures containing red and fallow deer, and other animals of various sorts. Marie-Louise delighted in all this and seemed

[1] Colorno is on the Parma, fifteen kilometres north of Parma. It is in one of the galleries of this palace that Marie-Louise placed the famous statue of Concord by Canova, for which, when expecting the early birth of the King of Rome, she gave several sittings to the sculptor. This statue, which Canova finished in his studio in Rome, remained there until 1819, when the Duchesse of Parma claimed it, paying the sculptor 24,000 francs, the price which had not been paid owing to the events of 1815.

The furniture and pictures in the palaces of Colorno were removed by V. Emmanuel to his palaces in Rome (Trolard). The statue of Concord is the only relic of Colorno left at Parma, and is to be seen in the Pinacothèque.

to be entirely absorbed in "country amusements." She designed English gardens and planted orchards. The evening occupations consisted of reading aloud, billiards, chess and backgammon.

While interested in all these country pursuits the Archduchess remained in rude health, notwithstanding that she was very soon expecting her confinement. Although no one doubted the nature of the relations of the Sovereign with her chamberlain, there had hitherto been no actual scandal.[1] But the fact that the services

[1] "In consequence of all these proofs (of her liberality and munificence) the affection of her subjects towards her increased and she was forgiven her lapses from the paths of virtue with Neipperg, because it was generally known that he was her constant adviser in such matters. Magawli became jealous of this intimacy between the Sovereign and Neipperg, and tried to influence Marie-Louise against him; but he failed and, falling into disgrace himself, was replaced by the Comte Ferd. Toccoli and the Chevalier Ferdinand Cornacchia." Carlo Malaspina, p. 14. We should here state that Carlo Malaspina (1808–1874) was originally a working man who, thanks to his intelligence and hard work, became curator of the Ducal Library. The MSS. of this official, who had been in a position to see and know everything, were not published until 1907.

of an accoucheur were required at the Ducal Palace towards the end of the month of April 1817 led to an endless production of jests, puns and epigrams on the subject. The expected birth, which cannot be said to have been a fit subject for rejoicing, took place on May 1, 1817. It was that of Albertine,[1] whose advent and baptism could only be mentioned with bated breath.

On her recovery, the Archduchess left Parma, being most anxious to superintend personally the works then in progress at her summer residence, which she was determined should be one of the marvels of Italy.

[1] Albertine-Marie. She was only given the Christian names of her father and mother. She was subsequently accorded the title of "Comtesse de Montenuovo." Certain historians have erroneously given the summer of 1816 as the period of her birth. The date that we give, May 1, 1817, we obtained from Zannelli's *Dizionario dei Parmigiani illustri*, and it is confirmed by the epitaph of the Comtesse Sanvitali, which is as follows: "Died on December 26, 1867, aged 50." Our date is further confirmed by a communication we received from the Sanvitali family itself, through the director of the Palatine Library of Parma, to whom we would now tender our most grateful thanks.

Marie-Louise certainly seemed never to have been so happy as in the midst of these charming hills and smiling valleys, a heavenly spot where she "divided her affection between her little dog, Lovely, and a parrot, whom she called Margharitina," a present from her sister Léopoldine.

She was not wanting in love for animals, but she forgot her son, who had to be content with the frigid affection of an old man—his grandfather, the Emperor of Austria.

On June 10, 1817, the Allies had finally agreed that the arrangements made by the Congress on June 9 respecting the Duchy of Parma should be maintained as far as the Archduchess Marie-Louise was concerned; but, at her death, the reversion was to be in favour of the Infant Don Charles-Louis and his descendants male. The King of Rome, thus disinherited, was to receive compensation in the shape of a pecuniary endowment. Marie-Louise saw nothing in this to grieve a mother's heart, which is shown by the terms in which she made her "dear Victoire" aware of this act of spoliation, on October

13, 1817: "The fate and the future of my son have also been arranged, and here, again, is food for much reflection. I confess that this is a source of much comfort to me, which I am sure you will share. As you are aware, I have never had any ambition for my son in the way of crowns or kingdoms; but my one wish has been that he should be the richest and most lovable private individual in Austria. Part of this desire was fulfilled by the treaty of June 10, and it is a great consolation to me that I shall now be able to close my eyes in peace, with the knowledge that when I am gone, my son will not be forsaken, or be dependent, for money, on any one in the world." And the ex-Empress adds in a light-hearted way: "I have now said enough, I think, about myself," as if she had been expatiating too much on a subject that was scarcely worth mentioning.

In the month of July 1818 Marie-Louise went to Vienna to visit her father and her son, whom she had not seen for two years. She took this opportunity of making a pilgrimage to Maria Taferl, whence she distributed pious

souvenirs to her friends, among others her "dear Victoire," to whom she sent an image and an ivory statuette of the Holy Virgin. The Emperor of Austria took advantage of the presence of his daughter in order to determine finally the position of the King of Rome. Almost on the very day when Napoleon, while taking leave of O'Meara, was saying, "If you see my son, embrace him for me, and never allow him to forget that he was born a Frenchman," the Emperor Francis, by a patent signed July 22, gave "to Prince Francis Joseph Charles, son of his beloved daughter the Archduchess Marie-Louise"—thus treating the child as if he were the son of an unknown father!—"the title of the Duc de Reichstadt," and gave him permission "to have and to use personal arms, namely: on a lozenge gules party per fesse or, two lions passant towards the right, the one in chief, the other in base. The oval shield posed on a ducal mantle surmounted by a ducal crown. For supporters two griffins sable, armed, beaked and crowned or, carrying banners bearing the ducal arms repeated."

The King of Rome was thus deprived of his dynastic name, and henceforth he was to be nothing but an Austrian prince.[1] Marie-Louise quitted Vienna, leaving her son thus deprived of all his rights, and towards the beginning of August she returned to her States.

General Neipperg had long ago conceived the idea of embellishing the capital. Two torrential rivers rising in the Tuscan Apennines flow through the States of Parma, Taro and

[1] The Prince's new German title appears to have excited the suspicions of the French Government and, in accordance with a decree of October 15, 1822, the police seized "a quantity of bottles of scent with labels representing the Duc de Reichstadt" in the shops of tradesmen in the Rue Royale, Lille. Two specimens of these labels have been preserved in the archives. The Prince is represented "wearing a hussar's uniform holding his plumed busby in his hand." The police made another search at the premises of MM. Langier, perfumers, where the Eau du Duc de Reichstadt, formerly sold as Eau du Roi de Rome, was made, and insisted on their withdrawing "the plates from the engraver, M. Pourlier, 65 Rue Galande." Police minute of October 18, 1822. Letter from the Minister of the Interior to the Prefect of Police, October 18, 1822. Letter from Anglès Prefect of Police to the Minister of the Interior (Arch. Nat., f. 7, 6,884, No. 6,097).

Trebbia. Although they are nearly dry in summer, they frequently rise suddenly and find their way along flat, irregular beds silted up with gravel. When the snows melt they overflow their banks, submerging the low-lying districts, thereby interrupting all traffic.

Neipperg determined to construct bridges and embankments, with a view to controlling these devastating streams. He commenced by building a bridge of brick and freestone, supported by piles, across the Taro.

The opening of this graceful, although strongly-constructed bridge, which was 565 metres long, with twenty arches, took place with much pomp in the month of September 1819. The ceremony, favoured by lovely weather, was a brilliant success, and the Empress assured the remembrance of this event by giving 250 francs from her privy purse to four-and-twenty poor young girls of the capital. The medal which Marie-Louise placed in one of the corner-stones of this bridge bore on one side the effigy of her Majesty, and on the other the following inscription—

"TARO FIRMIUS DENIQUE REPRESSO."

Neipperg then bethought himself of building a cemetery, which the Sovereign was resolved should be "the finest in Italy, after those at Pisa and Bologna.

"A space of 220 yards square was laid out and divided into four equal parts. The construction of the walls, which were to be embellished by fine porticoes, was commenced in the month of April 1820. Marie-Louise personally superintended the works and visited them constantly," and she felt that this walk amongst the dead, although depressing, was a comfort to her soul.

But Marie-Louise had other occupations of a less lugubrious nature, for we learn from her correspondence that the carnival of that year was "very gay, that the theatre at Parma was very good, and that she gave parties every Tuesday," on which occasions she herself joined in the dances. This "physical and moral exercise did her a great deal of good, she was be-

coming fatter." But in giving us this detail, Marie-Louise forgets to tell us the real reason—the expected birth of another child.

This did not prevent her, when at Sala, from making numerous excursions both on foot and on horseback, and when riding she was not afraid of taking any ditches or other obstacles which came in her way. The evening was spent in playing "billiards, backgammon, chess or draughts." If we may judge from her private letters, Marie-Louise had never been "so happy or so peaceful in her life," nor was this surprising for, according to most historians, she had just succeeded in easing her conscience by a marriage with Neipperg, thus converting their previous compromising relations into a union sanctified by the Church.

This morganatic marriage, which seems to have taken place in the summer of 1820, was not a public ceremony accompanied with the usual formalities and signatures. How and by whom was the marriage ceremony performed? What priest could have had the presumption to

bless such a union without dispensation having previously been obtained from Rome?[1] Who

[1] Such a priest would be liable to suspension and excommunication. "Having once established the fact of this union it is no business of mine to ascertain whether any legal means were discovered to render the children legitimate, and whether the union of Marie-Louise with the Comte de Neipperg took place before the death of Napoleon. In Italy, where such things are easily arranged, there is nothing more simple than to obtain the sanctification of such marriages. Two persons desirous of marrying make a declaration to that effect before a priest, who confesses them, gives absolution, celebrates mass and marries them, without even the presence of responsible witnesses. Marie-Louise at Vienna, as at Parma, never ceased saying that she would do nothing to obtain a divorce and would never entertain any such a proposal. This, and more especially the mystery surrounding the births of her children, leads one to suppose that this Princess did not contract a second marriage until after the death of her first husband." *Souvenirs Historiques*, II., pp. 470–471.

"Marie-Louise married Neipperg morganatically when she was expecting her second child by him (1820)." Trolard.

"Marie-Louise married Neipperg when she was expecting her second confinement in 1820—an invalid marriage, as Napoleon was still living." Comte Fleury, *Les dernières années du marquis et de la Marquise de Bombelles*, p. 378, E. Paul. Paris, 1906.

The prudent tact with which the *Almanach de Gotha* mentions the marriage of Marie-Louise is as fol-

were the witnesses of this mysterious marriage? At any rate the fact remains that, as Napoleon still lived, the marriage was invalid, and the issue illegitimate.

---

lows : "m. . . . 1820" is not calculated to invalidate the general opinion that the union of the Duchess of Parma with her favourite was premature. Lastly, in order that we may exhaust all sources of information respecting this delicate question, we should mention that Sforza Giovanni is still more prudently tactful; he is content to say that the date of the marriage is not known (*in che anno lo sposasse è ignoto*). *La seconda moglie di Napoleone á Parma*, Nuova Antologia 1894, Série III., vol. 138, p. 105.

VII

THE DEATH OF THE EMPEROR

At the very time when Marie-Louise, with a view to soothing her conscience and safeguarding her honour, married a second time, and was looking after her trivial mundane affairs, the exile of St. Helena, to whom she never gave a thought, was fast approaching his end. From the 15th to the 25th of April, 1821, Napoleon was occupied in making his will.

On the 28th of the same month he confided to his faithful doctor Antommarchi his last wishes for the Empress: "I also wish you to place my heart in spirits of wine, and take it to my beloved Marie-Louise at Parma. You will tell her that I have loved her dearly, and that I have never ceased to do so. You will tell her about all you have witnessed, and everything connected with me and my death."

Shortly before the end Napoleon, speaking to General Bertrand concerning Marie-Louise,

said, "You may be quite sure that if the Empress has made no effort to lighten my troubles, it is because she is surrounded by spies who prevent her knowing anything of what I am made to suffer. Marie-Louise is virtue personified."

The Emperor, no doubt, wished to save appearances before his death, for he had not forgotten the letter from Lavalette which he received during the Hundred Days. He indeed one day himself let it be known that he was not ignorant of his wife's infidelities. He went so far as to throw the whole responsibility on her own father, "who had cast that scoundrel Neipperg in her way."

In any case, when, before his death, he was extolling the many merits of Marie-Louise, the dying Emperor had no idea that his scrupulously virtuous wife was at that very moment on the eve of her second confinement.

At half-past five on the evening of May 5 came the end of that extraordinary life. In tempestuous weather, and amidst gusts of rain and wind which caused the trees and huts of

NAPOLEON I.

Longwood to shake as in an earthquake, the Emperor drew his last breath. From the few disjointed utterances which passed the conqueror's lips, the following words were distinguished: "My son . . . the Army . . . Joséphine!" It was not Marie-Louise who occupied his last thoughts.

The Duchess of Parma learnt this serious news from the *Gazette de Piedmont*.[1] But let

[1] A hitherto unpublished letter, which appeared in the *Intermédiaire des Chercheurs et Curieux*, shows that she was not afflicted but only annoyed by the sad intelligence. She would rather have heard it otherwise than from the *Gazette*, and the widow of the great man especially complains of this procedure and of the want of regard for her dignity, which appears to be the only thing which in any way affects her.

"Dearest Uncle,

"You must forgive me for not having written to you for some little time. . . . I am too well aware of the friendship you have always shown me not to be certain that I have been in your thoughts in connection with the event which has just taken place, and which has been the more painful to me because the news was conveyed by the public prints. I have done everything which duty towards my child's father (of whom I have personally never had in any way to complain) dictated, without in the slightest degree running counter to political interests, and my conscience is

the forgetful wife tell us in her own words the impression which the death of the conqueror of Europe made upon her: "I confess that I was extremely shocked. Although I have never had any deep feeling for him, I cannot forget that he is the father of my son, and that far from treating me badly, as the world appears to believe, he has always shown me the greatest respect; which, after all, is all that one can expect from a political marriage. I was therefore very much grieved, and although there is reason to be glad that he ended his unhappy life as a Christian should, I would have wished him many more years of happiness

---

clear. At first my health suffered, but now I am beginning to mend. I confess that what caused me the greatest pain is that I did not receive an official or even friendly and confidential communication on the subject from Vienna—the only source whence the news could have reached me with absolute safety. I confess that I should have expected more kindly interest and friendship from that quarter. It was a cruel blow, showing as it did how little one can trust one's own relations—a blow which time alone will be able to efface. Forgive me, my dear uncle, for troubling you with all this. . . ." *L'Intermédiaire des Chercheurs et Curieux*, p. 269. August 20, 1907.

and life, provided that they were not to be spent near me." What at this time seems to have troubled her more than the death of the Emperor were the appalling heat and *the gnat-bites*. "I have been so dreadfully bitten in the face," she says in her letter to her "chère Victoire," that I look a monster, and am glad not to be obliged to show myself." Nor had she any wish to let the world see the condition in which she then was.

The official announcement of the death of the Emperor did not reach the Empress till July 20, when she received a letter from the Baron Vincent, Austrian Ambassador in Paris.

The Ducal Court went into mourning for three months—from July 25 to October 24. A difficulty now arose as to the manner in which the death of Napoleon was to be officially announced. Was he to be styled Emperor—ex-Emperor—Napoleon—or Bonaparte? The question was how to find a formula which, while it spared the natural feelings of her Majesty, at the same time would not be at variance with the political principles universally held with regard to the deceased monarch.

Neipperg was not long in finding a solution of the difficulty in the following words: "*Serenissimo Consorte della Augusta Sovrana*," and it was thus that the official announcement was made of the death of his Serene Highness the Sovereign's Consort. The Dictator of kings is now called a "prince-consort"! The conqueror who had governed the world and advanced by victory after victory from Cairo to Vienna, and from Cadiz to Moscow, distributing crowns to his soldiers on the way! Such a turn of the wheel of fortune almost provokes a smile.

The obituary notice composed by Neipperg, which appeared, *without a black border*, on Tuesday, July 24, in the *Gazette de Parme*, was as follows—

"*Parma, July* 23.

"In consequence of the death of his Serene Highness, the husband of our august Sovereign, which took place on May 5 last on the Island of St. Helena, her Majesty, together with the ladies and gentlemen of the Court, the household of the Ducal House, and the servants, will go into mourning for three months, from the

25th instant until October 24 next inclusive. The mourning will be divided into three classes: from July 25 to September 4, deep mourning; from September 5 to October 2, half-mourning; and from October 3 to 24, slight mourning. The funeral services will be celebrated in the chapel attached to her Majesty's residence at Sala."

Metternich, having no doubt read this obituary notice with much amusement, wrote on August 2 to the General, congratulating him on the term "prince-consort," as also on the construction of the announcement, both of which were marvels of ingenuity.

On July 30 the funeral services and ceremonies were performed in the chapel of the palace at Sala, which was entirely draped with black, and decorated with great simplicity. On the sarcophagus was no emblem of Imperial dignity, no lettering, no ornament of any sort to recall the past.

Marie-Louise, under a veil which was cleverly arranged in order to conceal her condition, was

present at the ceremony in the Imperial closet. Members of the Court and the entire household occupied the other galleries, as well as a portion of the church. Marie-Louise ordered a thousand masses to be said at Parma, and a like number at Vienna, with the strict injunction that during the prayers for her deceased husband, at the absolution, the following formula should be used: "Pro femulo quo consorte Ducis Nostræ," and she at the same time gave instructions that the word emperor should on no account be mentioned in the service. The Court of Vienna did not go into mourning. The Duke of Reichstadt alone adopted that sign of respect for his father, and did so even longer than was customary.

At the end of July Marie-Louise went secretly to Solagrande for her confinement, and on August 9, 1821, a son was born whom they called *William* Albert. But it was not considered decent that the child should bear the name of his father. The Emperor Francis therefore signed a decree in which he stated that the Archduchess—whom he did not allude

to by name—had been delivered of a male child, on whom he had bestowed the title of *Comte de Montenuovo* together with the arms and rank of the high nobility which he continued to hold till, by a subsequent decree of July 20, 1864, he received the title of Prince of Montenuovo.

This name—Montenuovo—is simply a play upon words and sounds, the name Neipperg resembling in sound to Neuberg (new mountain), whence Monte Nuovo.

In July 1821 an event of some importance occurred in the Empress's household at Parma. The Comte de Scarampi was suddenly obliged to resign his post as private secretary to his sovereign. The Baronne du Montet, an intimate friend of the Comtesse de Scarampi, when mentioning the fact in her *Souvenirs*, so rich in revelations and confidences of all sorts, has given us a sketch from nature, so to speak, of the appearance and real character of the Empress.

This sketch enables us to see events from behind the scenes, and thus to learn much with

regard to the Empress's private life which is either concealed or smoothed over in official documents.

"The Comte de Scarampi was driven mad" (we are quoting Mme. du Montet), "not by over-work, but by the intrigues of this little Court. The poor man was convinced that the Court of Vienna would hold him responsible for the vagaries of Marie-Louise, and her neglect of the government of the Duchy.

"It was his wont to call on her every morning with his portfolio; but hardly had he opened it when *the Princess would call her parrot, or her small monkey, which would perch on her shoulders, and she never ceased talking to, or playing with one or other of these pets during the whole of the interview.* The trial of the Princess of Wales with the famous green bag completed the disturbance of his mental balance. He was always thinking that he was being blamed for the follies of Marie-Louise, and that he was being called as a witness against her. This was the first stage of his madness, and he died soon afterwards."

He was succeeded by M. de Werklein, a man of rough and haughty manner, of whom we shall have to say a good deal anon, and who was about to excite the discontent of the whole country by his corrupt administration.

On October 15, 1821, there arrived at Parma Dr. Antommarchi, the bearer of Napoleon's dying words to Marie-Louise.

Chevalier Rossi, a major of dragoons, presented the doctor to General Neipperg, who received him with kindness, and asked him any number of questions concerning the illness and the death of the Emperor. Antommarchi expressed the wish to convey the same details to the Empress, and also to hand to her a letter of which he was the bearer from Counts Bertrand and Montholon. He therefore begged his Excellency to obtain an audience of her Majesty. "It is impossible," answered Neipperg. "The very news of your arrival has, as it is, brought her grief home to her more acutely than ever, and she is now sobbing and weeping and is not in a state to receive you. I am, how-

ever, ready to act as your intermediary, and I will convey to her all that you have said to me, and deliver the letter if you are not afraid to entrust it to my charge." Touched by these kind words, Antommarchi handed the letter to the General, who left the room with it, but returned very shortly, saying, "Her Majesty has read the letter, and regrets extremely that she is unable to receive you, but it is quite impossible for her to do so. She welcomes with delight the Emperor's last wishes with regard to yourself; she must, however, submit them to his Majesty, her father,[1] before being able to give effect to them." Neipperg then presented the doctor with a ring from Marie-Louise, at the same time giving expression to the Empress's gratitude for his services and her ardent desire to assist his career.

Antommarchi, after thanking Neipperg for

[1] In this letter Napoleon begged the Empress to grant Antommarchi a life-pension of 6,000 francs a year as a reward for his services at St. Helena, and to appoint him Surgeon in Ordinary to her household in the same manner as M. l'Abbé Vignali had been appointed as almoner.

his kindness, rejoined the Chevalier Rossi. The very same evening, at the theatre, he caught a glimpse of Marie-Louise in her box. The opera was Rossini's *Cenerentola.* The Duchess of Parma seemed in the best of spirits, and appeared to derive much pleasure from the charming music. "But she no longer displayed that exuberance of health and that brilliant freshness of which Napoleon had so often spoken to his doctor—thin, broken, a mere wreck of her former self."

She showed traces, not of the sorrows and griefs she had experienced, as the Emperor's doctor naturally imagined, but of the after-effects of her recent confinement, of which he was, of course, quite ignorant.

A short time afterwards, Antommarchi had again occasion to pass through Parma, and was once more presented to the Comte de Neipperg. His Excellency renewed his assurances of her Majesty's gratitude, and handed him a letter from Marie-Louise to the Austrian Ambassador, in which she expressed her "good-will towards the doctor who had attended her husband to the

last, and her earnest desire to carry out Napoleon's wishes with regard to him." As a matter of fact there is nothing in the world which the Duchess of Parma troubled her head so little about, and no pension was ever accorded to the devoted doctor.

At the commencement of the year 1822 Marie-Louise had regained her strength. Her private letters show that she was then in "marvellously" good health. She devoted herself more than ever to organizing amateur concerts, which took place every Friday at the Ducal Palace. She "rode nearly every day," and in the evening, after supper, she went to the theatre.

In the month of September 1822 the kings who, the year before, had destroyed the Neapolitan Constitution and replaced a Bourbon on the throne of Naples met at the Congress of Verona by the invitation of Metternich in order to complete their policy by extending it to Spain.

Marie-Louise, still accompanied by Neipperg, and expecting her third child, paid a visit

to her father at Verona while the Congress was sitting. There she met Chateaubriand, the representative of France, and the great writer has given us an account of his interviews with the ex-Empress.

"At first," he writes, "we refused an invitation from the Duchess of Parma. She, however, insisted, so we went to her house, where we found her in the best of spirits. She evidently imagined that, as the whole world was then busying itself about Napoleon, there was no need for her to give him even a thought.

"In course of conversation she made a few casual remarks with regard to the King of Rome. She was enceinte at the time. Her Court, with the exception of M. de Neipperg, a distinguished gentleman, gave one the impression of decadence and decay.

"There were only two circumstances that struck me as being remarkable that evening, one was the fact that we were dining with Marie-Louise, and the other that Napoleon's widow was wearing bracelets made of the stone of Juliet's sarcophagus.

"When we crossed the Pô at Piacenza,

only one single vessel, newly-painted, and flying a nondescript Imperial flag, was to be seen. A few dragoons in stable-jackets and forage-caps were watering their horses—we were on the threshold of Marie-Louise's kingdom, and this was all that remained of the power of the man who had pierced the rocks of the Simplon, hoisted his flag over the capitals of Europe, and resuscitated Italy from her many centuries of prostration."

In conversation with the Emperor's widow, Chateaubriand remarked that he had seen some of her soldiers at Piacenza, adding that this small detachment must strike her as very insignificant in comparison with the vast Imperial armies of former days.

Marie-Louise replied dryly, "I never give it a thought." [1]

Soon after the return of the Empress to her States, a daughter was born who, however, died in infancy. All that is known of her is that she was buried at Parma in the church of St. John the Evangelist.

[1] *Congrès de Vérone, guerre d'Espagne*, I. pp. 69–70. Delloye, Paris, 1838.

VIII

THE EMPEROR'S WILL

ANTOMMARCHI had hoped to be able to convey the Emperor's heart to Marie-Louise, in accordance with his Majesty's last wishes, but every application made to Hudson Low with that view was without effect.

The British Government approved of the conduct of the Governor in not allowing any one to have access to the mortal remains of the Conqueror. But they were not at all easy in their minds as to the wishes the ex-Empress might entertain on the subject. They therefore begged Prince Esterhazy, the Austrian Ambassador in London, to approach Metternich with regard to this difficult question, for the influence of that statesman over the Sovereign of Parma was known to be paramount. The object of this was to obtain from the Emperor's widow a declaration of her desire that her husband's

remains should not be interfered with. This was a diplomatic way of avoiding the inconvenience of giving a direct refusal to the request that had been made. Moreover, what did Marie-Louise care about Napoleon's heart!

Towards the end of August, at the instigation of Metternich, she wrote a letter to her father to the following effect: "From the information conveyed to me by your Majesty's orders in the course of the month of July last, and from the news which has since reached me, I can no longer doubt that the Almighty has brought to a close the unhappy life of my husband, Napoleon.

"The newspapers had anticipated the intelligence conveyed to me by letters from Vienna and Paris. They even went further, and mentioned different suggestions with regard to the place chosen for his burial.

"As, since 1814, no opportunity has been afforded me of taking part in deliberations concerning his lot, I imagine that the same will obtain now. I apprehend, therefore, that my only course is to maintain the silence imposed

on me by your advice, as well as by the position I occupy, and to refrain from giving utterance to my natural feelings. In any case, if after all that has occurred there were one desire to which I would like to give expression on behalf both of myself, and also on that of the Duc de Reichstadt, it would be that the mortal remains of my husband and his father should remain undisturbed.

"I have, of course, unbounded confidence in your Majesty, therefore in making you aware of this my wish, I at the same time authorize you to make it public should you consider it either necessary or even desirable to do so."[1]

[1] In another letter to her father, dated October 1, 1821, Marie-Louise emphasizes still more clearly her indifference as to what might be done with the Emperor's mortal remains: "The conveyance of his heart to Parma would, in addition to the fresh shock it would cause me, afford a pretext for the evil-disposed to make pilgrimages to Parma which, in my present circumstances, would be most disagreeable to me, as my only wish in this world is to live in peace and quietness. I therefore count, my dear father, on your support in opposing the suggestion (um diese Sache zu Verhindern). Quoted by Edouard Wertheimer. p. 304.

"It will thus be seen," writes M. Welschinger in his important and trustworthy work, "that in obedience to her father, and out of respect to Neipperg, the woman who had been unfaithful to Napoleon now refused to accept the custody of his heart, although it was his last wish that she should do so. After all, she was right—she was no longer worthy of it!"

"We shall soon see her"—we are still quoting M. Welschinger—"in the presence of fresh difficulties. On July 16 Metternich wrote to Esterhazy with regard to the probability of Napoleon having made a will, which would of necessity in due course be sent to England. 'One cannot doubt,' said he, 'that in such a document Bonaparte will have made allusion to matters relating to political affairs. It will be the duty of the British Government to pay particular attention to this possibility, and we have too much faith in its wisdom not to be convinced that care will be taken not to disturb men's minds by any indiscreet publications. This consideration bears directly on any arrangement

he might have made touching the Duchess of Parma and her son.' "

Metternich added—and here it will be noticed that when money matters were in question, Austria no longer treated the Emperor's affairs with contempt—that if Napoleon had left a large fortune, the Allies, in the interests of European peace, could not view with indifference bequests to persons devoted to his cause who might make dangerous use of them.

" M. de Neipperg was, of course, quite ready to meet Metternich's wishes in every way. On August 3 he hastened to inform him that the Duchess of Parma would follow his advice absolutely with regard to the wishes of the deceased concerning his heart, etc., which had been buried in the St. Helena grave by orders of the British Government."

But the question of the money left by the Emperor interested Marie-Louise much more than did the arrangements made by him as to the disposal of his mortal remains.

Napoleon, when he left Paris in the month

of June, 1815, deposited about six millions of stocks at the banking house of Perregaux, Laffitte & Co.,[1] there to be held at his disposal.

By his will he left this amount to different persons, including MM. de Montholon, Bertrand and Marchand, whom he at the same time appointed his residuary legatees.

M. de Montholon, acting under the advice of the famous lawyer Dupin, had carried out in England all the formalities for proving the will

[1] The Perregaux, Laffitte & Co. bank, No. 9 Rue du Mont Blanc, had some years before lapsed into the sole hands of M. Laffitte. The origin of the fortune of this financier and politician is well known. Having been errand boy of a Bayonne notary, he went to Paris and sought an interview with M. Perregaux. Repulsed by the banker, he was sorrowfully retiring when, seeing something shining on the floor, he suddenly stooped, picked it up and pinned it to his coat. The financier, who had observed his movements, asked him what he was doing: "It is a pin that I picked up," replied the young Laffitte, "it would be a pity to waste it." "I see you are both careful and economical," exclaimed the observant banker smiling, "come and see me to-morrow, I may perhaps find something for you to do." Thus it was that Jacques Laffitte became the partner, the son-in-law, and the successor of M. Perregaux.

which the Government of Louis XVIII would not allow him to do in France, and he had returned from London with the will duly proved.

M. Laffitte, who had misgivings as to parting with the funds, had also consulted several lawyers, especially M. Delacroix, and he put forward the following among other reasons for not handing the money over to the legatees :—

1. That Napoleon Bonaparte, having been deprived of all his rights by the Royal Decree of March 6, 1815, had not the power of disposing of his fortune.
2. That the will being in manuscript (that is to say, in the form of a private document), the first thing to do would be to have the handwriting verified by the legatees.
3. That the will might be considered null and void, as it was signed by the Emperor's Christian name only—Napoléon.

While M. Laffitte was taking all precautions in order to safeguard himself, he was anything

but satisfied with regard to the whole matter. As an honourable man holding the money which had been confided to him, he desired nothing better than to give it up, if he could do so with safety; as a banker, however, he was obliged to consider the interests of his firm and, consequently, was not in too great a hurry to part with a capital of some millions, which would have made an unexpected drain on the resources of the bank. He saw the need of compromise.

On the other hand, Napoleon's executors were alarmed at the difficulties of form and procedure with which they had to contend, the antagonism of the Government, and the weakness of the judges.

The difficulties were great on both sides, and recourse was had to law, with the final result that a temporary arrangement was agreed to in Court, namely to deposit the securities in the Caisse des Depôts et Consignations.

Marie-Louise, after several ineffectual efforts to obtain recognition of the hereditary rights of her son, finally on May 18, 1837, abandoned her

claim to the estate of the Empress as heiress of the Duc de Reichstadt.[1]

[1] The question of the Emperor's will was not settled till 1854. In 1818 the two hundred million francs of the Emperor's private estate, reduced to one hundred and eighteen millions, were paid into the Treasury, by order of the King. A decree dated Biarritz, August 5, 1854, made a final settlement of the Emperor's estate. "The Budget of 1854 is charged with an extraordinary credit of eight millions of francs with a view to carrying out the testamentary directions of our August Predecessor the Emperor Napoleon I." Quoted by Dupin, p. 535.

The above named sum had been supposed to be sufficient to carry out the wishes of the testator. "Of the account which has been opened, four millions will be used to satisfy the personal legacies, four millions for the legacies to the Elba battalion, the wounded of Ligny and Waterloo, as also to repair the disasters of Brienne and Lery with a view to leaving tokens of the Emperor's glorious memory to those who most suffered from the two invasions." Quoted by Dupin, p. 534. With regard to what the Emperor left to his son, the Austerlitz sword, Sobiesky's sabre, his own gold dressing case, decorations, etc., it is known that when the executors asked that the last wishes of their "master" might be carried out, the Court of Vienna absolutely refused to accede to the request. The articles remained in charge of that Court until the death of the Duc de Reichstadt, when it was decided to divide them among Napoleon's brothers and sisters. The Austerlitz sword, which was kept back, was offered by Bertrand to Louis-Philippe, and was afterwards placed in the Invalides.

IX

THE OPENING OF THE TREBBIA BRIDGE

THE Archduchess, in the best of spirits, continued to enjoy a life of amusement at Parma, and gave juvenile dances, amateur concerts and masked balls, at which she did not hesitate to appear in costumes of the most fantastic description.

She herself describes, in her correspondence with Mme. de Crenneville, the disguise in which she appeared at a carnival ball on February 26, 1824: "A turban of four colours, pink, red, black and gold, and a white dress with flesh-coloured tights." This was her mourning for the Emperor Napoleon!

The Duchess of Parma also travelled a great deal, and towards the end of April 1824 she went with Neipperg to Genoa, and thence to Palermo, Milan and Naples. She availed

herself of this opportunity of admiring the marvels of Pompei and of dreaming by the waters of Tivoli.

On May 29 she wrote from Naples to her beloved Victoire: "The dear little thing (Albertina) writes to me of her own accord on every post-day, and as she tells me all that comes into her head her letters are not always very well expressed, but I prefer that to studied epistles. They tell me that she often cries between seven and nine o'clock, and I think she will become a most sensitive child, whereas her brother (Guillaume) is a good fat Patapouff, who does not take things so much to heart." Marie-Louise, however, was not entirely free from anxiety notwithstanding all she had to amuse her.

For some time Neipperg had been suffering from "a bad cold." He was "always hoarse in the evening" and coughed "horribly." He had become "so thin" that the Duchess began to be alarmed about his health.

Neipperg's son, Alfred, came to spend three

months with his father and step-mother. He was, according to Marie-Louise, "a charming boy," who already gave promise of a "brilliant future." The Duchess introduced him into society at Parma, and he also stayed a short time at Sala, whence he made an excursion with his father to Villeja. He rode frequently in the mountains with his step-mother, who was still a fearless horsewoman, and she considered the exercise beneficial to her health.

In 1825 the Emperor and Empress of Austria came to Parma, in order to spend a few weeks with their daughter. Marie-Louise wished to take advantage of their presence to open a bridge over the Trebbia, a stream which still brings back to memory Hannibal's victory over Sempronius (218 B.C.), and the defeat of MacDonald by Souvarow (June 17, 18, 19, 1799). This bridge, which was commenced in 1821 and designed by the architect Concocelli, was built of stone on piles, like the Taro bridge, had twenty-three arches over a length of

MARIE-LOUISE.

nearly five hundred metres, and cost 1,200,000 francs.

Following the precedent of the opening of the Taro bridge, the Empress gave to twenty-four young girls a dowry of two hundred and fifty francs each.

Two medals were struck in commemoration of the ceremony. One was placed in the foundations and was engraved as follows—

TREBIA
ANNIBALIS A. DXXXV. V. C.
LICHTENSTEINII
A. MDCCXXXXVI.
SOWAROFII. ET MELAS.
A MDCCLXXXXIX
VICTORIIS MAGNA
EX DECRETO AUGUSTÆ
A. MDCCCXXI
PONTE IMPOSITO
UTILITATE POPULOR.
FELIX.

The second showed on one side the heads of the Emperor and Empress of Austria, who were present at the inauguration of this great

work. The following inscription was engraved on the reverse of the medal—

M. LUDOVICA AR. AUS. DUX PARM. FILIA
PONTI TREBIÆ ADDITO AUSPICII LAPIDEM IM-
MISIT CORAM PARANTIBUS AMANTISS.
A. MDCCCXXV.

Thanks to Neipperg the states of Parma were well governed, and Marie-Louise ruled her little kingdom with credit. Moreover, many of the improvements carried out in the capital were due to her taste and munificence.

The fact that she was sovereign in her little principality outweighed any regret for the days of her former splendours. In 1827 M. de Lamartine, then French chargé d'affaires in Tuscany, was granted an interview by the Duchess of Parma. She received him well: "I had the honour," he writes, "of dining yesterday with her Majesty the Archduchess, and nothing could have been more kind or gracious than the manner in which she received me. This Princess, who appears more at her

ease in her small kingdom than she was in days gone by, is much more amiable and agreeable at Parma than she used to be in Paris. She is well-read, very desirous of making herself agreeable and at the same time very simple in her manners. She was perfectly natural in her conversation, and spoke of the past as of pre-historic times, and as if in no way connected with her or the present. The Empress and Marie-Louise are two absolutely distinct individualities united in one person, and she has no regrets, inasmuch as she is perfectly content with her new surroundings. . . . The Comte de Neipperg, her husband, is at the head of affairs. Being a man of intelligence and common sense he administers the Archduchess's Court as well as the government of her small kingdom with great judgment. Although a foreigner, and all-powerful, he commands both affection and respect. There is no doubt as to his political opinions, and he has hitherto taken care that Parma should not be drawn into any suggested intrigues for the

restoration of the Empire. He remarked to me this morning that 'the position of French ministers accredited to this Court is at first somewhat awkward and embarrassing, as they are apt sometimes to think themselves in a strange land, or even in an enemy's country; but when they get to know me it is not long before they find themselves quite at their ease. If there were any question of an intrigue here against the Bourbons or their cause I should not be at Parma, and the very fact of your finding me here proves that the sentiments of this Court are exactly what they should be, for you must remember that I have served the Bourbons before and that, consequently, their enemies are my enemies.' Such language, coming as it did from a man who does not entirely admit the nature of his relations with his sovereign, may appear proud and audacious. It is, however, none the less sincere and honest."

It is possible that Lamartine was perhaps too lenient in summing up the character of a

man like Neipperg. Be this as it may, the General, wishing to do him honour as a man of letters, and respecting his qualities as an official, begged him on leaving Parma, in the name of the Sovereign, to accept the ribbon of Commander of Constantinien de Saint Georges.

X

THE ILLNESS AND DEATH OF NEIPPERG

MANY years had now passed and the General had arrived at an age when fatigue is felt and repose needed. After ten or twelve years of quasi-married life his passion for the Empress had worn itself out.

Married to a young and frivolous woman, tired of a perhaps too-exacting love, Neipperg, with irritability due to age, chafed at his bit and longed again to draw the sword which had rested in its scabbard since 1815.

He now regarded his position of legal husband as somewhat of a bondage. If we are to believe the *Memoirs d'une inconnue*, his feelings towards Marie-Louise had not been for a long time those of deep affection; indeed, according to this unknown authoress, "it was stated as a fact that Neipperg was in the habit of beating

her." This accusation, it must be admitted, has not been confirmed from any other source. "What is quite certain," writes the Baronne du Montet, "is that General Neipperg, who had experienced the doubtful happiness of being the husband of Marie-Louise, was eventually bored to death with her. He was always bemoaning his lot (this I know from one of his intimate friends); he also regretted his military career, looking upon his life as having been absolutely sacrificed."

In becoming a member of the Court of Marie-Louise, he had to give up active service in the field, as well as his personal independence, both of which have so great an influence on the character of a soldier.

In July 1828 his health, which had been failing for a long time, suddenly became seriously worse. Heart trouble began to show itself, and Doctor Aglietti, a specialist, was summoned from Vienna to see him.

This doctor's treatment led to a marked improvement in the patient, and Neipperg soon completely recovered and left for Vienna

with Marie-Louise and the entire Court of Parma.

In the month of September, manœuvres were held in the vicinity of the capital, in which Neipperg, in his capacity of Feld-Marshal, determined to take part. At the conclusion of these military exercises, which had somewhat fatigued him, the General, accompanied by Marie-Louise and her Court, left Vienna at the beginning of October on their return to Parma. But on the journey he had a violent attack of fever and breathlessness, which necessitated his being bled. Not wishing to delay the Sovereign and her Court, he decided to travel alone and go by Turin. His health becoming worse, he was forced to stop at Aglie, a little town on a hill about 10 leagues from Turin, where Charles-Felix, King of Sardinia, invited him to stay at his château. The General's condition gave cause for great anxiety. He could no longer breathe when lying down, which necessitated his being continually in a standing or sitting position.

The Doctors Rossi, Moriggi and Gili who

were called in, advised bleeding him again and, in view of the frequency of the attacks of breathlessness, it was decided to give him quinine.

The following morning, as he was no better, leeches were applied, which gave real though only temporary relief. On October 9 he was bled again which, like the previous operation, led to no good result. On the contrary, more serious symptoms made their appearance.

"The lower extremities of the patient became dropsical within a few hours," which confirmed Dr. Rossi in his opinion "that neither the illness itself, nor the fits of breathlessness, belonged to the class of true intermittent maladies, nor could they be attributed to congestion of blood on the lungs." They were, according to him, the results of an abnormal condition of the heart or its surroundings which, by causing faulty action of different organs, led to the rapid establishment of a state of dropsy.

His condition became so serious that even rumours of the death of the Comte de Neipperg were spread. The removal of the patient then

became imperative, as the etiquette of the Court did not permit the death of a person unrelated to the reigning family to take place in a royal residence.

On October 12 the General was moved in a litter to Turin. The swelling of the legs considerably increased during the journey; his breathing, however, became easier.

Nevertheless, the Comte was unable to lie down; he was forced to remain in a sitting position, and when he tried to sleep he was invariably attacked by fits of suffocation. The drives which he took appeared to soothe him, but they also increased the swelling of his legs. It was in this sad condition that Neipperg left Turin and returned to Parma on the 29th.

On his arrival he had a violent fit of expectoration, which seemed at once to improve his condition; the fits of breathlessness became less frequent, and the dropsy in his legs diminished considerably, but very soon the bad symptoms returned in all their intensity, and the General was only kept alive by being bled, and his legs and feet being tapped.

On December 5, 1828, he became much worse. Professor Tomasini of Bologna and Professor Aglieti of Venice were then called in and, after having tried bleeding, quinine, etc., without success they, as a last resource, prescribed extract of soot—a remedy then used as a specific against fever, etc. All hope of saving the General had now vanished. Marie-Louise, utterly prostrated, and convinced that the result would be fatal, wrote the following despairing letter to her father: "This life seems to be killing me also by degrees; one day follows another, bringing with it the same misery and despair, for with the dawn comes no consolation, and we are always afraid of restlesness at night. My head is in a dreadful state, and the slightest occupation produces severe headaches, and my poor brain seems as weak and stupid as though I were recovering from a very serious illness."

Nevertheless, in the month of January 1829 a great improvement was visible. It was, however, but the pale flicker of an expiring flame.

"The poor General," wrote Marie-Louise on January 20, "had become so much better for

the last ten days, and his breathing had become so good that we really hoped that if he was not actually convalescent, he was at any rate nearly so. But since yesterday he has had a relapse which, though without a return of fever, has brought back the oppression on his chest; and although better this morning, we are again discouraged and anxious, fearing that some accumulation of water may be forming, or that the organic obstruction which they fear exists may have grown to an extent that it will be impossible to control. What a sad life! Only those who, like yourself, my dear friend, know what it is to tremble for the lives of those one loves, can really appreciate what my feelings must be at this dreadful moment. I am sure I do not know that it would not be better that the Almighty should take me, than that I should continue to live my present life."[1] Nevertheless, the General did not

[1] Letter to Mme. de Crenneville, Parma, January 20, 1829. After such an outburst of grief one can scarcely credit the statement of a certain historian who asserts that, "On the evening before Neipperg's death, knowing, as every one knew, that he was *in*

realize the gravity of his illness. The changes from relief to still more painful suffering followed each other in depressing sequence.

On February 20 Neipperg was at the point of death. The patient fell into a state of utter exhaustion—he was scarcely able to open his eyes or even murmur a few words. It was the end.

After forty-eight hours of coma, Neipperg died at 11.30 on the morning of February 22, 1829, and by his death Marie-Louise lost "the best husband, the most faithful friend, and all her worldly happiness."

The General, during the thirteen years that he had managed her affairs and through whose hands millions had passed, left in his writing-table but a "few louis" as an inheritance for his children! This paltry sum, and a cardboard box containing the principal decorations of Christian countries, were the net result of the greatness to which he had attained.

Marie-Louise gave Neipperg a most magnificent funeral, with all the splendour of a great

extremis, she appeared at the theatre." *Histoire de Napoléon II, Roi de Rome.* Par un ancien diplomate, p. 115. E. Pick, Paris, 1853.

political event. On February 25 the General's remains were borne with great solemnity from the ducal chapel to the church of La Steccata. To the rolling of muffled drums, the sad procession crossed the town amidst the profound and respectful silence of the crowd. First came a squadron of dragoons and two batteries of artillery; then followed a company of the regiment "Marie-Louise," a military band, all the clergy of the capital, the Bishop of Parma and, immediately in front of the funeral car, the General's charger led by a groom. On either side of the car, which was draped with black, walked thirty-six footmen bearing torches, who were followed by the General's aide-de-camp, the dignitaries of the Court, the magistrates, the notables of the town, and the entire garrison of the capital. On arrival at the church the procession halted and the clergy chanted the *De Profundis* while twelve halberdiers raised the coffin and carried it on their shoulders into the interior of the holy edifice. The funeral service took place on the following day at eleven o'clock, in the midst of general

mourning. All the clergy of the capital were present, and the absolution was pronounced by the Bishop of Parma, the solemnity being brought to a close, according to German custom, by the sacrifice of a charger to the spirit of the departed warrior. The Duchess of Parma, as a modern Artemis, erected on the tomb of her husband a monument in Carrara marble, the work of the Florentine sculptor Lorenzo Bartolini, at a cost of 120,000 francs. This monument, originally erected in the Church of St. Paul, was removed to that of the Steccata on the conversion of the ancient ducal chapel into a depot for electric light. Marie-Louise seemed to have buried her heart for ever in the tomb of her second husband.[1]

[1] The moment is opportune for the following question: "Was the Duc de Reichstadt aware of the relations between his mother and Neipperg before their marriage, and was he aware of the marriage itself? M. Edouard Wertheimer, who was fortunate enough to be able to examine the State archives as well as the correspondence of statesmen and of the Prince's tutors, writes as follows: "The Duc de Reichstadt has in no way given reason to suppose that he had the faintest idea of the relations between his mother and Neipperg and that he accepted the situation in silence. It

The death of Neipperg was generally regretted in the country. His affability,

---

is certain that those about him never divulged the secret of this *liaison*, while others, who might have been cognizant of it, had no opportunities of communicating with him. There is every reason to suppose that good care was taken to keep him in the dark with regard to the marriage of the Empress with the Comte de Neipperg. In any case, whether he knew of it or not, it is quite certain that, considering the great admiration he professed for his father, the exaggerated grief of his mother on the death of her second husband must have caused him profound sorrow" (p. 412).

When the General died Metternich, in a minute dated February 28, 1829, raised the question as to whether it would be wise to make public the marriage of Marie-Louise and Neipperg: "In my opinion," he wrote, "it would be wise to do so. There are several reasons in the interests of the Empress as well as in those of the two surviving children which appear to demand it." It was also the fervent wish of Marie-Louise, adds M. Wertheimer, to whom we are indebted for an insight into these valuable documents. On March 18 she wrote from Parma to the Emperor: "As regards the announcement of my marriage with the late Comte de Neipperg, I leave myself entirely in your hands. Whatever you decide is sure to be right, but I must add that the publication would be most agreeable to me (dass ich nichts als zufrieden sein kann), and that I am certain the General would have wished it." E. Wertheimer, p. 413, note 2.

friendliness and generosity, together with his open, cordial and seductive manners, had made him most popular and gained for him the universal sympathies of the duchies of which he was not only the administrator but, in fact, the ruler.

On a certain occasion a disorderly mob assembled in one of the open places of the capital. It was composed of young men who rebelled against some recent police regulations. The troops were about to act, but on the appearance of Neipperg, order was at once restored. The General made inquiries as to the grievances and promised justice. A kindly and friendly speech which he then addressed to them led to his being warmly cheered by the mob.

In 1817 an epidemic raged in Parma, and at the same time riots broke out, caused by the general distress. Neipperg, unaccompanied by any one, walked about the streets, mingling with the populace, and good-naturedly induced the

rioters to disperse, thus calming the public excitement. "A battery of artillery brought into action against the people would not have been as successful as were the more tactful, humane measures adopted by the General."

Being an honest as well as an able administrator, Neipperg had exercised zeal of a high order in reorganizing the administration of the duchies, in improving all branches of the service, in the impetus he gave to the carrying out of public works, and in founding all sorts of benevolent and popular institutions. We have already called attention to the building of the bridges over the Taro and Trebbia, and the cemetery of La Villette.

Other great works remain as monuments of his government.

Let us first mention the theatre at Parma which Marie-Louise ordered to be built in 1821 on the ruins of the convent of St. Alexander, and which was opened with much pomp on May 12, 1829.

The foundation of the "Hospice de la Maternité" dates from the arrival of Marie-Louise in the States. It was built to give shelter to poor women about to be confined, and as a school of midwifery to supply the country-side with experienced nurses.

Neipperg also reconstructed according to more modern ideas an old hospital at Parma—the "Hôpital de la Miséricorde."

Not content with having established a cemetery at the gates of the town, Neipperg suggested to the young sovereign the idea of building a chapel and vaults under the church of "La Steccata," in which to collect the scattered monuments of her illustrious predecessors. This sepulchral chamber was decorated with the most beautiful marbles the country produced. Among the monuments that were placed here were those of Don Philip, the husband of Louise-Elizabeth of France, daughter of Louis XV, and of Alexander Farnese, on which were placed his helmet and sword.

The following inscription was engraved on the door of this crypt—

CINERIBUS PRINCIPUM
EX GENTIBUS FARNESIA ET BORBONIA
QUI PARMÆ ET
MARIA-LUDOVICA, ARCH. AUSTRIÆ
DUX PARM. PLAC. WAST.
DECESSORES SUOS,
SIBI COGNATIONE JUNCTOS
MEMORI ADJECTU
HYPAGANUM CONFORMANDUM
ARAQUE INSTRUENDUM
CURAVIT
ANNO MDCCCXXIII

Neipperg's activity can be traced in other administrative works: the vast gardens of Colorno, the Galleries of the "Académie des Beaux-Arts," the "Casino Dei Boschi" at Sala, and the restoration of the Farnese theatre which the architect Bettoli turned into a beautiful, large and comfortable house.

Neipperg also made his mark in military history. Besides producing many essays, he was an active contributor to the *Militärische Zeitschrift*, and a translation of *Essai sur le service d'État-Major*, by General Crossard, is due to his pen.

XI

MARIE-LOUISE AT GENEVA

MARIE-LOUISE shed many tears, her grief being intense. She shut herself up in her palace, firmly resolved to end her days there, clothed in the deepest mourning. She told Mme. de Crenneville that "her home and her happiness had been completely destroyed." It was in vain that she said to herself that her dear lost one was happy and watching her from above—she was inconsolable. Six weeks after the death of Neipperg a Frenchman, the Baron de Vitrolles,[1] the minister of Charles X, recently

[1] Baron de Vitrolles had, under the Empire, been Inspector of the Imperial sheep-farms. Being a great friend of the Duc de Dalberg and of Talleyrand, he was one of the first, in 1814, vigorously to plead the cause of the Bourbons with the allies. During the hundred days he did all in his power to organize resistance to Napoleon in the south. He was Deputy from 1815 to 1816, he then fell into disgrace and subsequently, in December 1827, was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Florence.

accredited to the Courts of Florence, Modena, and Parma, had frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with the ex-Empress. He has given us an account of the different interviews he had with her. He writes from Florence on April 11, 1829: "Mme. l'Archiduchesse remains inconsolable. In the long conversation which I have had with her Majesty, it was evident that all her thoughts were concentrated on her recent bereavement. Her eyes filled with tears when she spoke of it, and it was her sole topic of conversation. She had lavished on Neipperg all her love as his wife and the mother of his children. No minister or confidential adviser could ever have been more completely trusted by his sovereign than was the General by Marie-Louise. People who remember her during her sojourn in France say that she has much changed and become a great deal thinner. Although taller and having perhaps more regular features, she reminds one not a little of Mme. la Duchesse de Berry. She appeared to take it as a compliment when I mentioned this likeness to her.

She speaks well and appears to be high-minded in her ideas. She is reputed to have a kind heart, a noble spirit, and an easy-going, perhaps somewhat changeable, character. What astonished me most in our conversations was the fact that she appeared to have quite forgotten Paris, and that her sojourn and life in France seemed to be quite a blank to her. She asked me what had happened to the Panthéon, and immediately afterwards inquired which was the principal (metropolitan) church of Paris. She seemed to know nothing of the members of Napoleon's family when they were mentioned. She even forgets those who were attached to her person to such a degree that she questioned me as to their appearance, looks and intelligence. In one of my last conversations with her, when talking of her Paris days, she exclaimed, 'Ah! mon Dieu, I have been very happy here until now, and the first years of my life have seemed but a bad dream!' On another occasion, seeming to be desirous of repudiating the reproach which had often been made, even in Italy, of her having

shown so little affection for Napoleon in the time of his adversity, she said, 'We princesses are not brought up like other women—nor have we the same surroundings or the same family sentiments. We are always prepared for events which will break family ties, and separate us from our parents, and which give us other and often opposite interests. My poor sister, for instance, who died in Brazil, miserable and away from all her family!' Marie-Louise then finished the conversation by again expatiating on the merits of her lost husband."

On May 12, 1829, the theatre which Marie-Louise had ordered to be built in 1821 was opened at Parma in the presence of the King of Sardinia, and La Pasta[1] took part in the performance. Nothing, however, could make Marie-Louise forget her grief. Her nerves were overstrung and she felt that the baths at Aix alone could benefit her health. But how could she bear to return alone to a place still

[1] Pasta (Judith), Italian singer, born at Como 1798, died 1865, one of the first singers in Europe from 1821 to 1840.

so full of the memories of the General and where she would, at every step, be reminded of his love and soft words. No, she would only go for a "cure" to the neighbourhood of Geneva, where she could breath the air of the Alps, and enjoy the balmy scent of the pine-forests and the aroma of the wild vegetation. Marie-Louise, however, did not entirely renounce all worldly pleasures, as will be seen from the following ending of a letter to her "chère Victoire," dated July 11: "If La Pasta sings, please take a box for me at the Carcano."

In accordance with the resolution previously mentioned Marie-Louise went to Geneva, accompanied by her two children, their tutor and a portion of her Court. She lodged at the Château du Petit Saconnex near Gex, close to the French frontier, which she had taken for one month.

There lived at Geneva at that time a well-meaning individual—Lecomte by name—who was a fanatical adherent of the Empire and embued with a craze for rhyming. He

spent most of his time in committing to verse the achievements of "La Grande Armée." Scarcely had the ex-Empress arrived than he composed this enthusiastic poem to Hector's widow, which proved a source of much annoyance to the police of Louis XVIII—

MARIE-LOUISE AT GENEVA,

BY

ELISÉE LECOMTE.

Je l'ai vue ! . . . Et mon cœur gémit et doute encor.
Je l'ai vue ! . . . Ils disaient : c'est la veuve d'Hector !
C'est elle, c'est Louise, épouse d'un grand homme,
Fille d'Empereur, mère du Roi de Rome,
L'Impératrice enfin ! . . . Je contemple, à ces mots,
Celle qui fut unie au premier héros.
. . . . . .
De tes brillants destins qu'un pouvoir trop jaloux
Ait enchaîné tes pas loin d'un auguste époux ;
Que ton cœur n'ait jamais outragé sa mémoire,
C'est ce qu'on doit penser, c'est ce que je veux croire.
Mais si tu n'étais plus tout entière à son fils,
Si ta faiblesse. . . . Ah ! Dieu ! Louise, je frémis. . . .
Vils calomniateurs, tremblez, qu'osez-vous dire ? . . .
Ce n'est que par ce fils que Louise respire ;
Sans lui vous la verriez descendre chez les morts,
Par les chagrins tuée, et non par les remords.

Marie-Louise in coming to Geneva had not the remotest desire to revive the memories or rekindle the hopes of the Empire. The pre-

fect of the Lower Rhine, who was well informed as to what was going on in the country, endeavoured to convince the Minister of the Interior of this fact, and wrote: "The sight of Marie-Louise is enough to prove that her journey had no other motive than that of seeking health. She is crippled by rheumatism and other ailments, and looks like an ill-preserved woman of fifty-five."

Nevertheless Marie-Louise spent her time at Geneva most agreeably. She made excursions "on horse-back," and "visited everything of interest in the neighbouring villages." She was only seen once in society, at the house of the Duchesse de Clermont-Tonnerre. The ex-Empress, being in a good humour, laid herself out to be agreeable. "She asked for news of her two cousins, Mme. d'Angoulême and Mme. de Berry, and of the young Duc de Bordeaux, who is, I am told, the pride of France."

She was also seen at Geneva at the annual regatta, where she "displayed a galaxy of liveries and carriages and where a beautifully

decorated boat had been prepared for her use on the lake." Part of the crowd received her with cheers but, according to official reports, some "very ironical and disrespectful remarks" were also heard amongst the people.

After staying there for a month, Marie-Louise left the Château du Petit Saconnex on September 20. She stayed a night at Lausanne, whence she went straight to Parma.

XII

THE REVOLUTION OF 1831

THE pure and vigorous air of Switzerland had "given new life" to the sovereign of Parma. She returned quite enchanted with her journey. She had seen Gustave, the General's son, and wrote: "He is a charming boy and is the one who will follow in his dear father's footsteps. His affection is really quite touching . . . and altogether I like him immensely for, besides having a strength of character rare at his age, he has the best of hearts, and is very intelligent. May God grant that he may not be spoilt either by the world or bad company. When I think of my son and of Guillaume, I am already anxious on that score."

In the month of December we find that the correspondence of Marie-Louise no longer betokened such profound grief. After her some-

what exaggerated sorrow, the Archduchess had again "launched out into society."

On her birthday she was present at a charming concert: "I have never seen," she writes, "such extraordinary hips as our singers had; I don't know whether they were real or artificial, but they certainly were terrible."[1] And further on she adds in despair: "We have now been nine days without anything at the theatre." As she cannot give balls until her mourning is at an end, she contents herself by going to the theatre, where the performances, to quote her own words, "were beneath contempt. . . . Yesterday," she wrote, "they gave *Tancred*, and it really seemed as if all the singers were trying to see who could shout the loudest."

During the last week of January 1830 Marie-Louise gave her first ball at Court. "It was very brilliant," she writes, "and I must say

[1] In this letter Marie-Louise gives a thought to the King of Rome: "If there is anything new in the way of neck-ties or winter waistcoats in Paris, please send me two of the former and a dozen of the latter, as I wish to send them to my son."

that, considering how small a town Parma is, we have some very pretty young married women and a good number of them. To-morrow is the subscription ball. Dressing for parties bores me dreadfully, I have quite got out of the habit of it. Fringes of feathers are now the fashion here."

In January 1831 Marie-Louise really appeared to have regained her youth. It was as if a magic wand had suddenly turned her into a young woman of twenty. She had become passionately fond of acting, and when *Les Deux Maris*,[1] by Scribe and Varner, was given in the Court Theatre at Parma, the parts were undertaken by Mesdames Werklein, Sanvitale, Paveri, and Marie-Louise. This play, full of wit and finesse, aided by the beauty of the ladies, was a great success.

On January 27 in order, no doubt, to prove that she had a vocation for the stage, Marie-Louise again acted with the ladies of her Court

[1] Comedy in one act, with lyrics, produced for the first time in Paris at the Variétés Theatre, February 3, 1819.

in a play by Paveri, after which the Ducal Theatre remained closed for a few days.

On February 1, however, a second performance of *Les Deux Maris* was given at Court by the same aristocratic company. On this occasion Marie-Louise undertook the part of a "jeune première"—that of Mme. Rigaud. A few days afterwards, another little comedy, full of charm—*La Gageure imprévue*,[1] by Sedaine, was given. In this Marie-Louise played the principal part, that of Mme. de Clainville.

A veritable tragedy, meanwhile, was taking place elsewhere. While Marie-Louise was indulging in amateur theatricals at Parma with great *éclat*, the Revolution of 1830—which had declared war against monarchy of any kind—had spread its propaganda and inflamed the north of Italy.

At Neipperg's death the post of Secretary of State was vested in Baron Werklein, who had acted as private secretary to Marie-Louise

[1] Comedy in one act, produced for the first time in Paris by the King's Comedians, May 27, 1768.

ever since the retirement of Comte de Scarampi.

The Baron, who was born in Transylvania of humble parents, commenced his career as a mathematical master in a school of artillery. Subsequently after serving on the Austrian staff, he became colonel of a regiment of the line. In 1815 he was appointed Austrian Commissioner in the little Duchy of Lucca, which he administered for three years, indeed until the time when the Duchy was returned to the Queen-mother of H.R.H. the Duke of Lucca. Werklein was then summoned to Parma by the Count de Neipperg in order to take up the appointment of private secretary to the sovereign.

There was "something uncouth and even chilling" in his appearance. He was a man with a certain amount of cleverness, but quite devoid of principle. Soon after his arrival mismanagement of the Court finances became apparent. Money was lavished in "speculation and costly enterprises. Moreover, it was noticed that some previously impecunious

persons suddenly became rich." He induced Marie-Louise to give her sanction to unpopular laws, and rumours that the imposition of new taxes was imminent circulated throughout the Duchy.

On February 10, "Le Jeudi Gras," vague signs of excitement were observable in the capital. Gangs of young men, whistling and shouting, paraded the streets. Parma was in a ferment. On the following day the crowds increased in numbers, and on the same evening above the dull murmuring of the people cries of "Death to Werklein!" were heard on the palace square. On February 12 similar scenes occurred, the excitement increased, and troops were called out to disperse the mobs. Marie-Louise, frightened to death, wished to retreat to Piacenza. She ordered her carriages and gave instructions that her own regiment should be held in readiness to escort her. But rumours of her intended departure having reached the ears of the people, a rush was made to the palace, under the windows of which shouts arose of "Vive Marie-Louise!" and also "Death to Werklein!" the latter to em-

phasize the cause of the insurrection. Marie-Louise showed herself on the balcony, and was received with much cheering and applause. But when the crowd learnt that she persisted in her determination to leave the capital, a general cry of "Death to Werklein!" arose, and expressions of sympathy with the sovereign were no longer heard. The troops endeavoured to push back the mob, which led to violent rioting, in which "a portion of the faithful troops was disarmed." A band of young men succeeded in entering the palace in search of the minister, whom they threatened to kill. They were at last made to understand that Werklein had left Parma, that he had even crossed the frontier, and that their search for him would therefore be fruitless.

None of the men surrounding the Empress was above mediocrity. The mistakes they made were deplorable, the measures they took were faulty and they had not the necessary courage for such a crisis—which circumstances led to the triumph of the revolution.

On the night of the 14th Marie-Louise, accompanied by General Bianchi, Baron Mistrali,

her chamberlains, and a portion of her court, secretly left the revolted town. By the fitful light of a cloudy moon, the small cavalcade started on the road to Casalmaggiore,[1] on the left bank of the Pô, where they joined a battalion of Austrian troops which escorted them as far as Cremona.

As soon as the news of these events reached

[1] On February 17 Marie-Louise wrote the following letter from Casalmaggiore to Mme. de Crenneville: "A thousand thanks, my good and dear Victoire, for your letter and the proofs it contains of your friendship, which is such a comfort in my present trouble so terrible to bear. . . . I beg of you, my dear friend, to reflect seriously before you decide to run the risk of coming to Piacenza. I could not wish my worst enemy to witness such scenes as I have had to go through. You may therefore imagine how anxious I should be to spare you a similar experience. I am, however, just as grateful to you for even entertaining the idea of coming to me. Do not yet look out for lodgings for the children, they are now my only consolation and I could not bear to part with them. If I have the slightest suspicion of anything wrong at Piacenza I will send them at once to Milan. Mme. Scarampi is quite well and is with me. If you only knew the devotion of the few Parma people who are with me, especially Bianchi, S. Vitalie and Paveri, you would know what a consolation that must be to me. I am very low, both mentally and physically."

the Duc de Reichstadt he, anxious for his mother's safety, hastened to ask the Emperor of Austria's permission to go to her rescue. The Emperor refused to accede to his request. The young Prince was much grieved by the cold water thus thrown on his ardent aspirations, and wrote a very touching letter to his mother on the subject: "This is the first time," wrote the Prince, "that obedience to the Emperor's orders has caused me real pain."

On the 18th Marie-Louise took up her abode at Piacenza, while an Austrian army, under the command of General Geppert, was marching on Parma. Cardinal Oppizoni addressed a pastoral letter to all the clergy and people in his ecclesiastical province, including the dioceses of Parma, Piacenza, etc., pointing out to the clergy that it was their duty to remain faithful to the Holy See and the House of Austria, and to the people the necessity of returning to their allegiance to the sovereign. The peasantry, however, of Bologna, Modena and Parma had never shown much sympathy with the revolu-

tionary cause, which was confined to the large towns.

Marie-Louise appointed Baron Vincent Mistrali Minister of Finance, and continued Baron Cornacchia as Minister of the Interior. At the same time she issued from Piacenza a proclamation in which she declared "all decrees of the Revolutionary Government null and void," and inviting "all the soldiers who had remained faithful to her cause to join her at Piacenza."

Meanwhile, the insurgents had effected the capture of the Bishop of Guastalla, as also of all the members of the court and the Empress's servants who had remained at Parma. There was, however, dissension in the councils of the provisional government. The Duke of Modena, surrounded by Austrian troops, had already returned to his States. On March 13 the Austrians entered Parma without encountering any resistance. On the previous night there had been a rising against the provisional government. A court was formed for the trial of all citizens who had taken part in the

revolutionary movement. No one was found guilty.

When order was re-established the President, Vincent Mistrali, was sent by Marie-Louise to Parma in order to re-organize the administration of her Government. On August 8 she herself re-entered the capital—crowded with people and soldiers, but silent as a desert.

Notwithstanding the apparent quiet, Marie-Louise was not at all satisfied as to the state of affairs, and an Austrian garrison was maintained in the capital for some years.

The Imperial Government sent to the Archduchess the Baron de Marshall, a member of the diplomatic service, to act as Imperial Commissioner at her court. He was a man of great energy and undoubted honesty.

Under his supervision a new Government, composed of capable men whose private lives were above suspicion, were about, as we shall presently see, to take up the management of public affairs.

Their business was to re-organize the Arch-

duchess's Household and the administration of the country.

Marie-Louise appointed Baron de Marshall, formerly Minister Plenipotentiary of Austria, Grand Master (High Steward) of the Court and of the Ducal House, which was composed as follows—

Captain Richer, of Austrian hussars, private secretary and chief of the department of Foreign Affairs. He had formerly been private secretary to Neipperg.

Count Bondani, President of the department of Finance.

Baron Cornacchia, formerly a lawyer, chief of the Home Department.

Comtesse Ventura, Lady-in-Waiting.

Comtesse Scarampi, "Grande Maitresse."

One Chief Almoner.

One Chief Chamberlain.

One Chief Master of the Ceremonies.

The Commander of the Body Guard.

Five permanent Chamberlains.

Fifty ordinary Chamberlains.

Two Ladies of the Court.

Forty-two Ladies of the Palace.

Baron Amelin was Court Superintendent, and it was his duty to receive the orders of High Steward every morning and see them carried out.

The household, including the company of halberdiers and the firemen, amounted to more than four hundred persons.

As it was of first importance to do away with all abuses and establish order in public affairs, necessary reforms, as well as great economies, were effected in all branches of the Government. Many officers, both civil and military, were dismissed.

The Civil List, which hitherto had amounted to 1,800,000 francs, with a supplementary estimate of 200,000 francs, was reduced to 1,200,000 francs for the ordinary budget, and 300,000 francs for the extraordinary budget.

XIII

DEATH OF THE DUC DE REICHSTADT

THE march of events has obliged us to neglect Marie-Louise for a time while her ministers were reorganizing her Government at Parma.

She had remained at Piacenza to recover from her excitements far from the insurgent town. She continued to receive excellent reports from her capital, and was at last in a position to write to Mme. de Crenneville as follows: "All is quiet at Parma. Thank God the feeling there is improving, and my presence is much desired. I am told that the town is deserted, and that sadness reigns everywhere; it will not recover, I am sure, for many years."

Anyhow, Marie-Louise enjoyed her stay at Piacenza very much. Spring had come and, under the influence of a bright and warm sun, the beautiful gardens of this summer residence

were gay with the variegated blooms of the budding spring flowers. The month of April, with its fresh colouring, imparted the energy of youth to the sovereign. It is needless to say that the presence there of her children and intimate friends added to the soothing effect of these surroundings. She left Piacenza "with tears in her eyes," for she had found there the "repose she so much needed."

Her reception at Parma was "frigid." Nevertheless the town was "illuminated for three nights." The evening after her arrival a cantata was sung at the theatre, where Marie-Louise, in her box, was received with applause from the audience. In general, however, the population evinced no real sympathy for her, and this she reported to her "dear Victoire" as follows:—"There is no doubt that the fire is simmering beneath the cinders, and the general feeling is very hostile; if any one doubts it, they have only to see the insolent demeanour of the people when one of the royal carriages is seen in the streets."

It is not surprising, therefore, that she very

soon made up her mind to leave Parma for Sala, "there to breathe fresh air, free from all disquieting communications."

She had scarcely taken up her abode in her summer residence when she heard that the cholera was sweeping Europe, and devastating the continent from north to south and east to west.

"If it comes in this direction"—this is not a speech to be proud of—"I shall remain the whole winter at Sala," she wrote to her dear friend; "I shall then be within reach in case I have any orders to issue, but at the same time I shall be to a certain extent protected from infection."

She soon learnt that the fell disease had attacked Vienna, and she again tells Mme. de Crenneville how terrified she is: "I am in the utmost anguish for all my relations, and especially for my son, who, although he is with the Emperor at Schœnbrünn, is sure not to take as much care of himself as the rest of the family. I think that I shall be far less frightened when he is here with me than I am now, when he is

with my people, and separated from me by so many hundreds of miles.

"I do not yet know where I shall shut myself up when the cholera approaches; but I do not fear such imprisonment to the extent that you do, if we are driven to such extremes. As far as seclusion is concerned, it would only be like spending a winter in the country, but the consequences, the ravages and the expenses brought about by cholera, will be simply incalculable.

"I feel sure that we shall have it in Italy before the end of the spring, and all the precautionary measures that one has to take give me an immensity of trouble." It will thus be seen that Marie-Louise already foresaw the difficulties she would have to encounter with regard to the expenditure which an invasion of cholera would necessitate.

In this crisis she thought that in order to increase her financial resources the silver-gilt and lapis-lazuli dressing-table-set which the town of Paris had presented to her could not be better employed than in relieving the sufferings of her

subjects threatened by this epidemic. On the advice of her Minister of Finance, Count Bondani, she ordered the conversion into money of all the fusible portions of this magnificent work of art, and further ordered that the proceeds should be immediately applied to the relief of the victims and the needs of those rendered orphans by the pestilence.[1] The melting of this metal realized 125,000 francs.

At one moment Marie-Louise also thought of raising money by means of the King of Rome's silver cradle; but the Duc de Reichstadt claimed it, and so the magnificent souvenir was sent to Vienna.

These troubles did not interfere with Marie-Louise's enjoyment of the pleasures of life.

[1] We must at once say that the cholera did not appear in the Duchies till 1836. The epidemic was virulent from June 19 to September 15, during which time 1,212 cases of cholera were registered at Parma alone, of which 438 proved fatal. In the country 4,258 cases out of 8,333 terminated fatally. Malaspina, p. 29. It was at this time that an altar was placed in the Church Del Quartiere at Parma, dedicated to "Notre-Dame de la Santé Publique," the appellation by which the Holy Virgin was invoked when cholera appeared in the country.

Almost light-heartedly she wrote from Parma on February 26, 1832—

"I am very much afraid that I shall be unable to go to the ball on the 6th, for I do not arrive at Piacenza till the 3rd, and they have made all sorts of preparations for me for the carnival fêtes. Last Wednesday, Ricci's new opera, *Il nuovo Figaro e la Modista*, was given. Such charming music!"

The Archduchess spent the month of May at Piacenza. Her being much occupied with balls, dinners and dances did not prevent her from thinking about the health of the Duc de Reichstadt.

In a letter to Mme. de Crenneville she wrote as follows: "When ugly rumours are about in the town, I am foolish enough to be over-anxious, for when one is far away, one is apt to imagine all sorts of horrors, and I dread the future. Although I shall be delighted to see my son again and to be able to judge for myself as to the state of his health, which now troubles me a great deal, I think that the Italian climate will be bad for him. His lungs, thank Heaven,

are quite sound, but it is his liver which is affected, and every one knows that a hot climate is bad for this. He is dreadfully low, always wants to be alone, and suffers terribly from biliousness. He no longer coughs, and is able to go out walking and driving, but it will be long before he entirely regains his health. Ferrari tells me that what would do him most good are mineral waters, and I believe he is going to take some. He would not be astonished if it ended in an attack of jaundice, but says there is no cause for alarm; God grant that he may be right. *For if he became worse, and we had cholera here, I could not go to Vienna, for I feel very strongly that it is the duty of sovereigns to sacrifice all that is most dear to them in order to share every danger with their subjects.*"

And Marie-Louise goes on to say: "Since my ball, my cold has returned, and I have pains in my chest. I am so pleased that it is over, but I am bound to say that it was a beautiful sight. Mme. Scarampi gave a charming dance; but as I am not allowed to sit up late, I was

The King of Rome

From a painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence.

obliged to leave at midnight, much to my regret."

While Marie-Louise was writing this letter to her "chère Victoire," there was no longer any doubt in Vienna as to the state of the Duc de Reichstadt's health. The young prince was confined to his bed and was slowly dying.

Although told of the dangerous nature of her son's illness, she could not make up her mind to leave her States. It was not until the reports were actually alarming that she consented to start. She stopped at Trieste on her way, to see the Emperor, who happened to be there at that time, and where, being taken rather seriously ill herself, she was compelled to remain for some days.

She at last arrived at Schœnbrünn on the evening of June 24.

We are told that her distress was really great when she saw the terrible change that the illness had wrought in this youth—formerly so handsome and beaming with intelligence. He was now speechless and bent double. His cheeks were hollow, and his eyes wan and sunken.

Raising himself in his bed, he clasped his mother in his feeble arms—this mother who, oblivious of her most sacred duties, and who had early weaned him of all maternal love and care, now came to hear him draw his last breath.

The pleasure which the presence of his mother afforded the prince seemed for a brief period to diminish the severity of his illness. But his days were numbered.

On July 21 a curious incident occurred: a flash of lightning, followed by a crash of thunder, as if announcing the death sentence of the King of Rome, struck one of the Imperial eagles on the roof of the palace of Schœnbrünn. "It was fitting," they said at Vienna, "that the death of Napoleon's son should be heralded by a peal of thunder."

During the night, fits of nervous excitement were followed by intervals of complete exhaustion. Captain Baron Moll, the Prince's tutor, never left the sick room. At about half-past three in the morning the Prince was seized with a violent pain; he sat up and exclaimed in German, "I am dying, I am dying." Moll

rushed to the sick boy's bed and, with the help of Dr. Nickert, supported him. The Prince cried out, "Call my mother—take this table away—I want nothing now."

Thinking that the crisis would soon be over, they did not deem it advisable to disturb the Archduchess. Moll and Dr. Nickert remained by the bedside of the Prince, whom they continued to support.

Of a sudden, the sick youth seized the Baron's arms and clutched them convulsively, calling out with difficulty, "A poultice—a blister!" These were his last words. His eyes became fixed, glassy, lifeless. He breathed quietly, but was unable to utter.

Then Moll hastened to report the change to Marie-Louise's lady-in-waiting and the Archduke Francis, "whom the Prince had begged to be near him during his last moments."

When his mother entered the death-chamber she trembled from head to foot. She staggered and, in order to prevent falling, seized the Baron's arm. At the foot of the bed she burst into tears, unable to say a word. The Prince

recognized her, and a sad smile illumined his face. Twice he tried by moving his head to convey to his mother a last good-bye which his lips were unable to express.

Besides Marie-Louise there were at that time by the sick boy's bed General Hartmann, Captain Standeisky, Baron Marshall, Comte de Scarampi, Dr. Malfatti. Amid the deathly silence in the room, there entered a young court chaplain. It was the first time that he had ministered to a dying man, and during the prayers of the last Sacrament he carefully avoided anything in the way of ceremonial which might have a disturbing effect on the young Prince. The service was followed with profound sorrow and attention by all who were present. Every one knelt, Marie-Louise, who was prostrate, leaning against a chair for support. At the conclusion of the service, the young priest asked the Duke if he should read to him or offer up a prayer. With a slight inclination of the head, the dying youth signified that he would like the latter. The chaplain then commenced to pray in a sub-

dued tone. Suddenly, at eight minutes past five in the morning, after having tossed his head once or twice from side to side, the Duc de Reichstadt slowly passed away. Several curious coincidences attended this death. It took place in the same room and on the anniversary of the day on which the Prince had heard of Napoleon's death. It was in this room, also, that the conqueror of Wagram, amid a flourish of trumpets, had signed peace with Austria subdued and quivering at his feet. Lastly it was within the same four walls and on the same day of the year that the King of Rome was made to renounce his glorious name.

All was over. The King of Rome was sleeping his last sleep, and Marie-Louise was carried fainting from the room.

The Duc de Reichstadt, booted and spurred, dressed in a white tunic and blue trousers embroidered with silver, and wearing his decorations, lay in state at Schœnbrünn the whole of Sunday on the bed in which he died.

On Monday, the 23rd, an autopsy of the body was made, after which a mask was taken of the

young Prince's emaciated face. On the 25th, at five p.m., a hearse drawn by six white horses, richly caparisoned, bore the coffin of the once King of Rome to the little church of the Capucins, where it was placed in the crypt.

The court went into mourning for six weeks.

After the funeral Marie-Louise, desiring the condolence and sympathy of her father, rejoined him at the castle of Persenberg, whence she subsequently returned to Parma *via* Salzburg and Innsbrück.[1]

[1] At the beginning of August Marie-Louise returned to her States. On August 12 she wrote as follows to Mme. de Crenneville: "You can imagine, my dear Victoire, what it is to me to be obliged to remain inactive and with nothing but my sorrow to think of. If it were not that I have Albertine and Guillaume who, of course, demand my care and attention, I should pray God to call me to Him, that I might rejoin the two persons whom I have lost and whom I loved better than anything in the world."

XIV

THE COMTE CHARLES DE BOMBELLES

We have now reached the year 1833. The Baron de Marshall had only accepted the mission of redressing grievances and re-establishing order in the Duchy on the condition that on the completion of his task he might leave the country. Having fulfilled his undertaking he requested his Government to relieve him and allow him to return to Vienna.

This appointment required a man capable of influencing the weak character of the Archduchess and exacting obedience from the members of the household, an individual, in short, of such absolute integrity as would command the respect and esteem of all.

For this post the court of Vienna selected a man of courage and experience, a diplomatist with every desirable qualification.

M. Denormandie relates in his racy *Souvenirs* that one evening, during the Restoration, the Marquis Marc-Marie-Henri de Bombelles, Bishop of Amiens, accompanied by two young officers, was entering the drawing-room at an embassy when the groom-of-the chambers asked his name. "Announce the Bishop of Amiens and his sons."[1] But perceiving the foolish and stunned expression of the groom-of-the-chambers and of the footmen who lined the vestibule, the Marquis-Bishop corrected himself: "Then pray announce the Bishop of Amiens and his brother's nephews."

This Bishop, full of youth and spirit, who wore his biretta like a shako, was destined to be the future father-in-law of Marie-Louise.

The Bombelles family, established in Alsace in the eighteenth century, was descended from Salmon de Bombelles, a doctor of medicine,

[1] The Maréchal de Castellane relates as follows: "One evening, at M. de la Ferronays, the Marquis-Bishop played valses and quadrilles on the piano, he even danced a little himself. I trust that the good Bishop will not have been eternally damned for so trivial an offence." See Comte Fleury. "Les dernières années du Marquis et de la Marquise de Bombelles." Emil Paul, Paris, 1906, p. 369.

born at Sèvres in the Comté d'Asti, who was naturalized by King Charles VIII.

The first member of the family to appear in history is Henri-Francois, Comte de Bombelles, a French general, who was born in 1680 and died in 1760.

His son, Marc-Marie-Henri, born at Bitche, October 6, 1744, is celebrated for his extremely active life, full of vicissitude—he was successively soldier, diplomatist and bishop.

Brought up with the Duc de Bourgogne, brother of Louis XVI, he entered the Royal Military School early in life. He took part in the Seven Years' War, and became a Captain of the Berchiny Hussars at the end of the campaign of 1763. Fortune smiled upon him. At the age of twenty-one he entered diplomacy and filled the post of secretary of embassy at The Hague, Naples, and England successively. He was appointed ambassador to Lisbon in 1786 and to Venice in 1789. When the Revolution broke out in 1789 Bombelles, who was an ardent royalist, and would hold no post under the new *régime*, resigned and, thinking that honour was equal to patriotism, he joined

the army of Brunswick and Frederic's Old Grenadiers. But after the battle of Valmy he was obliged to say good-bye to his companions in arms, and he retired to Switzerland quite discouraged, and lived there on a pension of a thousand ducats from the Queen of Naples, whom he kept informed of the movements of the coalition.

In 1800 Bombelles, who was not a man to remain long idle, again entered active service in Condé's army, but soon the "Corps des Émigrés" was disbanded, and Bombelles retired to Austria.

Very much distressed at the death of his wife, *née* Mlle. Angélique de Mackau, who left him a widower with four children, he entered holy orders at the age of sixty-five, and devoted to the service of God all the energy that he was now unable to exert in favour of the royal house. As curé of Oppelsdorf, in Prussian Silesia, in 1806, and as Dean of Ober-Glogau in 1814, he was renowned for his geniality, simple piety, Christian courage and charity.

The Empire was no more. At the Restoration Bombelles returned to France. In 1816 he was appointed Almoner to the Duchesse de Berry, and in 1819 became Bishop of Amiens, where he proved himself to be "a zealous organizer and perfect dignitary of the Church."

He died on February 22, 1822, leaving four children—

A daughter, Caroline, who married the Vicomte François Biandos de Casteja, whose marriage he himself had solemnized.

An eldest son, Louis-Philippe, who was born at Ratisbonne in 1780 and who, after having tried his hand as a soldier at Naples, entered the Austrian service as ambassador and represented Austria in Tuscany and Switzerland.

A second son, Henri-François, who was born on June 26, 1789, and became the tutor of Francis-Joseph, Emperor of Austria.

The youngest son, Charles-René, born at Versailles on November 6, 1784, and who will take us back to our subject and to Parma.[1]

[1] It will be seen that according to these dates the younger son would be five years older than his elder brother.—*Translator.*

While still quite young he entered the Austrian Mittrowsky regiment of infantry as ensign, and became captain in 1804.

In 1814 he returned to Paris as aide-de-camp to Prince Schwarzenberg, commander-in-chief of the coalition armies, and he remained there until he became a lieutenant of infantry.

We must now quote Mme. du Montet, who has given the Comte de Bombelles a very important place in her *Souvenirs*, every page of which is redolent of mirth, imagination and good nature.

"Charles de Bombelles is a straightforward gentleman, as kind-hearted as his brothers, but more ambitious. He combines the commanding manner of a soldier with the charm of a man of the world desirous of making himself agreeable. He has also, so to speak, two different voices—the one domineering, alarming and over-powering and the other tender and persuasive. He changes frequently from one to the other, and the contrast is very puzzling. These two voices—one

might almost say these two distinct characters —were on occasions most useful. As a diffident, retiring and refined man he had a charm for many women, whereas in his relations with others he owed more than one society success to his arrogant and over-bearing manner. With his gruff voice he led people to believe him capable of anything, and he had recourse to more tender accents when whispering soft nothings into the ears of the ladies he wished to please. It was quite amusing to see Charles de Bombelles imposing conditions on Mme. de Cavanagh, whose daughter he desired to marry. She was rich, he had nothing, absolutely nothing, but, after having made himself pleasant and agreeable to that poor Caroline, he adopted a defiant attitude when speaking to the mother. . . . 'Twenty thousand francs a year, or no Bombelles!' 'But twenty thousand francs a year is a great deal! And you have nothing,' his friends remarked with diffidence. 'What do you call nothing,' he exclaimed, or rather shouted in a voice of thunder. 'And how about *my name?*'

"Love, interest and wounded vanity, all had a part in these negotiations, which eventually resulted in his marriage with Mlle. de Cavanagh. In the first place there is no doubt he was in love with his *fiancée*, secondly her fortune tempted him, and thirdly his vanity was hurt because he was not making a more aristocratic marriage.

"The young Comtesse de Bombelles was passionately in love with her husband and with his name. She did not live long, as she succumbed to an affection of the chest at the age of twenty-five. She was not pretty, but very pleasant. She died at Vienna in 1819, leaving two children, a boy and a girl. In her extraordinary will she insisted that her heart should be placed in a leaden box and that her husband should always have it with him, even on the shortest journeys. No sooner had his young wife died than Charles de Bombelles wrote a note to my husband, piteously appealing for his help and good offices as a friend. This especially referred to the operation of removing his wife's heart. The Comte de Bombelles

tearfully implored my husband to see that his wife's last wishes were duly carried out. She expressed a desire in her will that her husband should be present! But he had not the courage to obey this shockingly inhuman injunction, and begged M. du Montet to take his place. I should here add that my husband was filled with indignation when he saw one of the operating surgeons, teasing and romping with one of the servant maids while this ghastly work was being carried out. Charles de Bombelles had not the courage to keep this poor heart constantly with him, and he again had recourse to M. du Montet, begging him to become its custodian. The heart, therefore, remained with us until Bombelles's departure for France a few weeks afterwards. His relations having impressed him with the unseemliness of permitting his wife's heart to be carried and knocked about in a trunk, it has now happily found a Christian resting-place in the chapel of the Château d'Ancy-le-Franc in Burgundy, the residence of M. de Louvois, cousin of the Marquis de Bombelles.

"A year afterwards Charles de Bombelles fell desperately in love with a beautiful and rich young lady, Mlle. de Bartenstein. It was a courtship such as one reads of in German novels—long sentimental conversations and hysterical letters. Like a real heroine of romance, Mlle. de Bartenstein possessed a secret, was vacillating, and repeatedly made promises only to break them. On the other hand the Comte Charles alternately hoped, despaired and made himself as disagreeable as possible during the excitement of this extraordinary flirtation. At length Mlle. de Bartenstein recognized that she really only loved him in deference to the wishes of her parents. This she conveyed to him in the most charming manner, both by letter and speech—she even permitted him to impress a chaste kiss on her forehead, and then married a good-natured, fat, rich Hungarian without a spark of sentiment in his composition."

Bombelles soon consoled himself, and took great interest in the education of his children. As he had now nothing to think of but his own

future, he applied at Vienna for the appointment of chamberlain to the Crown-Prince with the rank of colonel, and at the same time made application in Paris for a court appointment worth 6000 francs a year.

"Both these dignities were conferred on him at the same moment," we are quoting Mme. du Montet, "but his French appointment arrived several days earlier than the other. However, he succeeded in persuading the Emperor and his devoted supporters, among whom was the Comte de Mercy, that his father had applied in Paris on his behalf absolutely without his knowledge, and that he had not dared to incur the displeasure of so excellent a parent. He accepted the French appointment, at the same time regretting the German honours. But most extraordinary of all, no one seemed to resent this double dealing on his part, especially in a country where offence is quickly taken in a matter of this sort. He left for Paris with the German rank of colonel in his pocket which, however, was of no use to him in France. Seven or eight years later he

became lieutenant-colonel of a regiment quartered at Nancy."

We must here relate an incident in his life which will give us an insight into the character of the man, and we will again quote the Baronne du Montet, whose simple familiar language is characteristic of her charming style.

"He was dining with us one day at Vienna. It was, I think, in 1819 or 1820. The conversation turned on the extraordinary choice which Louis XVIII had made in the appointment of Fouché. A regicide for a minister! This seemed to me an act of high treason. What a humiliating surrender to the Revolution! 'Since,' I exclaimed, 'concessions of this description are apparently so unimportant in the eyes of the King, he would have been better advised had he maintained the title of Emperor and the tricolour flag which would have been much appreciated in many quarters!' I had scarcely uttered these words when the Comte Charles de Bombelles flew into a violent passion. 'The tricolour cockade,' he ex-

claimed, in a voice of thunder, 'the tricolour cockade indeed! Let me beg of you to give expression to these sentiments in the Faubourg St. Germain, and you will soon see that the Faubourg St. Germain will close its doors to you! The tricolour cockade!' He stamped his foot on the floor, trembled all over and became more and more excited.

"'Thank you,' I replied, endeavouring to make myself heard. 'Has your Faubourg St. Germain never accepted the tricolour cockade? And pray what cockade did the chamberlains and the guards of honour wear? Answer that, if you please.'

"M. de Bombelles was in a perfect fury and I, with a shrug of the shoulders, continued, 'I am more royalist than you, for I should have accepted any national colours chosen by the King, especially if it proved to be a prudent and conciliatory concession to the people. Indeed, anything would have been better than the appointment of Fouché as minister.' But he now lost his temper to such an extent that M. du Montet, who had at first smiled at

our quarrel, thought it was high time to interfere.

"That evening I was at Mme. de Choteck's, where I related the details of this dispute, which caused much merriment. I was in the most interesting part of my story when the door opened and in walked the Comte Charles, who, quickly perceiving that the laughter was all on my side, approached me with a contrite look and, with his most persuasive voice, asked me to make peace. I laughingly acceded to his request. In order to prove his gratitude, he took from a vase of flowers on one of the tables a beautiful white rose and a red and a blue flower which, together forming a tricolour nosegay, he handed to me with a slightly derisive expression on his face. 'I will not accept it from you,' I exclaimed, 'but be sure of this, that if the King offered it to me I should accept it, for,' I repeated, 'the colour of the flag makes no difference to me, provided it has the royal sanction. Moreover, my belief is, that kings are free to adopt any colours they please, more especially when those

colours have witnessed such glorious days.' This quarrel ended with much laughter and was the success of the evening. Several years afterwards, as I said just now, M. de Bombelles was quartered at Nancy—it was at the time of the Revolution of July. One evening after dinner he came to the house of my sister-in-law Victoire, where we used all to meet. He was pale, haggard and evidently very much disturbed. In order that we should not observe the tricolour cockade on his shako, he at once placed it in a dark corner of the room. He then came up to us, hiding his face in his hands and burst into tears. We, of course, thought something dreadful had happened, that the King had been murdered, in fact everything that was horrible passed through our minds.

"However, in a broken voice he told us that that morning, in the absence of his colonel, he had been ordered to make his men wear the tricolour cockade.

"'And you accepted it!' I cried. 'Yes, you accepted it from the blood-stained hands of revolution and mutiny!' M. de Bombelles

said nothing and stood dumfounded before us. 'Not long ago,' I continued, 'you scouted the very idea of wearing it even by order of the King! Do you remember our conversation at Vienna?' 'Do not be so cruel. I beg of you spare me,' he replied. But I stamped my foot on the ground, and murmured sorrowfully, 'Oh! if God had only willed that Louis XVIII had given this cockade to the army you would not be accepting it to-day from hands reeking with the blood of your friends of the royal guards!' But the loyal Comte de Bombelles did not long wear this emblem of revolt and usurpation, for he left the service of France. As a Royalist of proud descent, faithful to the cause of the vanquished, and determined to maintain his allegiance to the legitimate King, Bombelles left Nancy and made an expedition to Italy, visiting Turin in order to see his brother Henri. He then went to Vienna, where he found his son the Comte Louis, who was serving in the Austrian army, and his daughter Marie, who had been adopted by his sister-in-law."

The first thing that Prince Metternich said

on seeing Bombelles again was: "Well, Bombelles, are you not sorry that you left us?" The answer did not encourage the Prince to press further the suggestions he desired to make. Prince Metternich realized that the Comte de Bombelles would be more easily influenced by affection than by ambition, so he returned to the charge in another way: "The appointment of Grand Master of the Court of Parma," he said, "is now vacant owing to the death of the Comte de Neipperg. It is a post which requires a man strong enough to influence the weak character of the Archduchess Marie-Louise, to be master of her small court and to govern her States with honesty. The Imperial family have been thinking of you, they want you to accept the appointment; do not refuse it." M. de Bombelles was greatly surprised, at first declined and eventually only yielded from very noble and disinterested reasons. Bombelles left for Parma; he was then forty-eight years of age. He was a distinguished-looking man of medium height, somewhat haughty and cold in manner, and his

general demeanour was serious and reserved. Exceptional judgment, consummate tact, cautious reticence, great prudence in the conduct of affairs, and above all a great charm of manner, combined to make this scion of a noble house a most remarkable man. He was also noted for his religious ideas and severe morals. Marie-Louise received him with pleasure and she communicated the impression he had made on her to her "chère Victoire" as follows: "I am quite enchanted with the Comte de Bombelles of whom I was so afraid; that is as far as I can judge in so short a time. He has all the qualities one could wish for and is, at the same time, firm and gentle in his manners. He is such a worthy man that I am indeed fortunate to have secured his services." In another letter she says jokingly: "He is a positive saint, but oh! so agreeable in society." The position of the Comte de Bombelles when he arrived at Parma was fraught with difficulties. "He came," wrote M. Challiot, the Archduchess's steward, "into a country dis-

tracted by feuds, and indignant at the strong measures which it had been necessary to take, in order to sweep away the former abuses. The civil list was kept at 1,200,000 francs for the ordinary, and 300,000 francs for the extraordinary expenditure. By degrees he filled up the court appointments, which had become vacant—appointing persons who had earned the respect of the public. The accounts were kept with severe regularity. A budget drawn up every year assigned to each department an amount which was never exceeded; on the contrary there was very often a surplus. As far as was possible, everything supplied to the court, and all works required for the Ducal residence, were issued for tender and open to competition. Each department was minutely organized, all expenses were settled and paid once a month; a balance sheet showing receipts and expenditure was drawn up yearly, and submitted for audit to the Treasury of the Duchies, before being presented to her Majesty." The Comte de Bombelles re-organized the military service of the

Ducal house, which consisted of a company of fifty halberdiers, commanded by the senior adjutant of the palace, under whose orders were three adjutants and as many sub-adjutants. He also re-organized the Body Guard at Piacenza. But the most important of his military reforms was the formation of two battalions of infantry, one of artillery, two companies of engineers and, lastly, a body of gendarmes, which was a model as far as esprit de corps, efficiency, discipline, appearance and equipment were concerned.

The Comte de Bombelles "was in the habit of rising very early, and he would then prepare the day's work, especially all political correspondence, at home. He then went to chapel for mass, after which he waited on her Majesty to receive her orders. At 9 a.m. he received in his study the steward of the palace, the military members of the household and the chiefs of departments, all of whom called to take their instructions for the day." Having completed his work in the morning, Bombelles

would accompany the Archduchess when she drove in the afternoon. At 5 p.m. he conferred with her on state affairs, and in the evening after dinner he accompanied her to the theatre, where she always remained for two or three hours.

XV

THE THIRD HUSBAND

In September 1833 Albertine was seventeen years old and of an age to marry.

She was a charming girl, as tall as her mother, kind and gentle, and not without a certain amount of natural intelligence. A marriage between her and Comte Louis Sanvitale, chamberlain to Marie-Louise, and of an old well-known Italian family, had long been contemplated.

Comte Louis was born at Parma on November 7, 1799.

His father was Comte Stéphane Sanvitale, an Italian statesman who in 1815 had a great share in the negotiations which were then carried on with a view to expediting the return from the Louvre of the pictures taken from the Parma Museum.

This was a true marriage of affection, having its origin in the childhood of the two young people, and Comte Louis was very much in love.

"Sanvitale is so much in love," wrote Marie-Louise, "that he will see and hear of nothing but his *fiancée*."

The marriage took place on October 26, 1833, at Piacenza, quite quietly, notwithstanding the high rank and position of those interested.

The sight of this good-looking couple revived in the widow of Napoleon and Neipperg vague longings for fresh conquests in the region of love. Something of youth still lingered in her heart, and she pined for a companion.

She was not long in making a choice and, without much ado, proposed marriage to the new Imperial Commissioner Bombelles, who, as he had never thought of or desired anything more than the political inheritance of Neipperg, received the proposal with bewilderment.

Marie-Louise insisted. With her soft voice trembling with emotion, so well did she plead her cause, that she succeeded in convincing

Bombelles that their marriage was the one thing necessary to ensure her lasting happiness.

Thus it was that Bombelles yielded,[1] and on February 17, 1834,[2] six months after his arrival in Parma, he secretly married the widow of Neipperg—and of Napoleon.

Were they happy? Were they fond of one another? Did this marriage bring about a true companionship? They alone could have answered these questions—the secret was theirs.

[1] If he consented to be the unacknowledged husband of a princess, it was certainly against his wishes, of which his high-mindedness and independence of spirit are sufficient guarantees." Baronne du Montet, p. 296. "M. de Bombelles, who never had any thought or desire to succeed the Comte de Neipperg except politically, had, without wishing it, obtained the same influence over the heart of his sovereign as his predecessor." Comte de Falloux, nephew of the Comte de Bombelles, I., p. 195.

[2] It is Marie-Louise herself who supplies the date of the marriage in her two wills of May 25, 1837, and of May 22, 1844. "I bequeath to the Comte Charles de Bombelles my 'grand-maître, to whom I was secretly married on February 17, 1834. . . ." Article 17 of the second will (see p. 277).

In any case a mystery appears to shroud this alliance.

In her letters the Duchess of Parma makes scarcely any allusion to her new husband, nor has Bombelles left anything to show what his feelings towards his wife really were.

We learn from her correspondence that the ex-Empress continued to occupy herself with journeys, fêtes and operas, while at the same time she did not neglect her chilblains, her rheumatism or her nerves!

M. de Falloux, who had opportunities of seeing something of Marie-Louise and her third husband a few years after their marriage, has devoted a chapter to a description of their simple lives, which he might have headed "Philemon and Baucis."

"I should certainly have passed through Parma without stopping there," he writes, "had I not been sincerely attached to the Comte de Bombelles and his children. Besides, I knew my uncle's kindness of heart and was sure that he would prompt me as to what I should say

in the event of my having an interview with the Empress, which in any case would, of course, be a very short one. On my arrival I was horrified to learn that the Archduchess was in the country with the Comte de Bombelles, and that a court carriage was waiting to convey me to the imperial residence in the suburbs. I obeyed the summons with fear and trembling, but I must confess that these feelings were at once dispelled not only by my uncle but by the Archduchess herself. She immediately put me at my ease by speaking to me quite naturally and with evident pleasure about Paris. Her conversation, which was in no way forced, frankly revealed a pleasant remembrance of her youthful amusements in that city.

"The Emperor Napoleon, an admirer of everything great in all phases of life, delighted in the characters of our classical theatre, in the demi-gods of Racine and the heroes of Corneille, so superior, as he was himself, to the ordinary level of human nature. The presence of Talma and that of Mlle. Mars were essential

at all official functions. This was especially the case with regard to Talma, as the Emperor, understanding glory better than sarcasm or philosophy, infinitely preferred Corneille to Molière. The Empress made no such distinctions and she gave to Mlle. Mars the place of honour in her memory. 'Mlle. Mars was at Milan a short time ago,' said she, 'and I went at once to see her act. How charming she is still! What a voice! And what a fascinating creature!' The Archduchess, however, did not in any way allude to the Emperor or the Empire; indeed, she talked of Paris as a stranger might who had enjoyed the opportunity of seeing it at its best.

"I do not know whether the Empress ever was beautiful; but at any rate when I had the honour of seeing her, her looks were anything but attractive. She stooped, and her lower lip was thick, one of the characteristics of the Austrian imperial family, and very drooping, which made her look older than she was. She was very simple in her manners, and was

accessible to all—a traditional custom at the Austrian court. She was not a brilliant conversationalist, but spoke good-naturedly and was never spiteful. Everything about her betokened method, goodwill towards her subjects and a constant desire to do her duty by her little kingdom. She did me the honour of allowing me to accompany her in her drives. On these occasions I witnessed several incidents which were really quite touching. When clear of the town she would alight from her carriage, visit the different villages and walk along the high roads leaning on my uncle's arm. She was followed by a servant carrying a large bag full of rolls of money. She allowed any one to approach her.

I saw many an old woman kneel before her, kissing her hands and presenting a petition. She would bid the suppliant rise, and cast her eyes rapidly over the document. If it was a claim on her generosity she handed one of the little rolls of money out of the big bag; if the petition contained matter not so easily adjusted,

she promised to give the subject her consideration which, I am assured, she always did."

Marie-Louise's third husband made use of the absolute power confided in him, as did Neipperg, in the furtherance of the highest interests of the country. Parma, in particular, is indebted to Bombelles for various useful institutions.

Among the most important acts of his administration are the rebuilding, in 1836, of the Hospital for Incurables, the construction of a fine road between Parma and Tuscany, and of the road from Berceto to Borgotaro; the building of bridges over the Arda, the Nure, and the Tidone; the foundation of baths at Tabiano and that of the Marie-Louise College, the administration of which was placed in the hands of the Barnabites.

Parma also owes to Bombelles an immense, healthy, well-ventilated building, in which were concentrated all the butchers' shops, which until then had been scattered over the town. This market, which was commenced in 1836

and finished the following year, cost Marie-Louise 200,000 francs.

The following undertakings are also associated with the memory of Bombelles: the restoration of the ducal palace; the foundation at Parma of a military school to which sixty students were admitted free and one hundred and fifty on an annual payment; the new room in the library, which was finished in 1834 and cost 55,000 francs; and the foundation at Parma of the House of the Brothers of Christian Schools, on a portion of the site of the St. Alexander Convent.

In conclusion we must not forget that it was Bombelles who introduced the sisters of the "Congregation de St. Vincent de Paul" into the civilian hospitals, and that it was he who first enlisted the services of the ladies of the Sacré-Cœur for the education of aristocratic and middle-class girls in the various schools. Fault has been found with Bombelles for his religious enthusiasm,[1] which no doubt had some-

[1] There was much dissatisfaction when Mareshall was replaced by the Comte Charles de Bombelles . . .

thing to do with Marie-Louise's latest attitude towards religion. One thing is at any rate certain, that the reign of the "Congregation" at Parma became absolute under his administration.

---

a disciple of Loyola, who brought an amount of clericalism into his mode of administration, which excited an ever-increasing antagonism towards him in the minds of all intelligent and patriotic men. Carlo Malaspina, pp. 26 and 27.

XVI

THE ADVENTURES OF A TENOR

If we are to believe what we are told, there is no doubt that Marie-Louise's life was not at this period free from questionable incidents.

The Comte de Bombelles could not always be with her, for his duties obliged him to visit the different portions of the Duchies, and therefore occasionally left the heart, imagination and feelings of Marie-Louise too much to their own devices.

Although the Archduchess had long since reached the age when women should retire gracefully from the field of romance, and repent of their past in a confessional, her nature was still subject to powerful impulses.

The whole of Parma, at that time, had gone mad about a young tenor, Jules-François-

Lecomte, who was also the admired of all Parisian admirers and a literary Bohemian.

He was below the average height, his hair and whiskers were black, his complexion was dark and colourless. He had a good figure, charming manners and was particularly distinguished-looking. His father was a naval officer and Jules was born at Boulogne on June 27, 1810. At first he entered the Navy, and after several prolonged cruises attained the rank of first lieutenant. In 1832 he left the Navy and tried to make his mark in literature. Novels relating to naval adventure were then the fashion, which gave him an opportunity of making use of his professional knowledge. His first book was entitled *Pratique de la pêche de la Baleine sans les mers du Sud.* This was followed by *Relation d'un naufragé*, *L'Abordage*, *Bras de fer*, *L'Ile de la Tortue*, a Maritime Dictionary, *Lettres sur les Ecrivains français*; the latter, which he published under the pseudonym van Engelgom, contain many very spicy anecdotes concerning the authors of the day. At the same time he contributed to

the *Indépendance belge*, and founded the *Navigateur*, the *Revue maritime*, and *La France maritime*.

In 1837 an incident, as unfortunate as it was unexpected, suddenly checked the youthful novelist's career.

Jules Lecomte, when very young, had once lost his head "to an extent which led him to commit a very serious fault." To help a poor demi-mondaine he had light-heartedly "signed a bill for a hundred francs," not an unpardonable sin had he not "used another person's name." This unfortunate transaction brought him within the meshes of the criminal law. "It would have been not only easy, but a simple act of humanity," wrote one of his most intimate friends, Charles Monselet, "not to carry the matter to extremes. The interested parties were begged and implored to hold their hands before the trial came on, and had, of course, been indemnified. All this was of no avail. They had decided to ruin Jules Lecomte—and ruined he was. This young

JULES LECOMTE.

and rising author was sent to prison. His prosecutors would show no mercy."

Jules Lecomte was compelled to go abroad, in order to plead outlawry. He took up his abode in Italy and, being without means, appeared as a tenor at Liège, Munich, Vienna, Venice and finally at Parma.

Marie-Louise saw him one evening, looking young and bright behind the glare of the footlights with a charming presence and a voice full of passionate emotion. As soon as she set eyes on the handsome young singer the Archduchess resolved that he should be counted as one of her admirers.

She sent for him to court, made him sing to her alone, "a slavery which was both pleasant and exacting, for the blood of Lucrezia Borgia flowed in Marie-Louise's veins."

Jules Lecomte, like all tenors, enjoyed life and was himself popular. Accustomed to make love to young ladies of the stage and others of the same standing he, when tempted by the suggestive encouragement of this

Beatrice of fifty, was no doubt curious to compare the innocent verdure of spring with the mature warmth of autumn.

Thus it came about that one fine morning Souverain, Lecomte's publisher, received a letter from Italy—a masterpiece in ten lines—which brought expressions of surprise and amazement to the face of the good man: "Yes, my dear Souverain (how well your name suits my story!) I am Napoleon's successor. It is not known at the Tuileries, but I know it here, at Parma. I sang to Marie-Louise, and she kept me to supper—which lasted all night. When I awoke in the morning I fancied myself the Emperor! You must not be too proud of your marine novelist. If I have boarded a vessel, it was in the capacity of a tenor and not as a novelist. Cupid said: 'One must have two strings to one's bow.'"

Arsène Houssaye, who saw this letter, commented wittily on it in his *Confessions*, and wrote: "Marie-Louise did not love the Emperor, but she adores Jules Lecomte. The chamberlains address him in the third person:

'Would Monsieur le Comte like to do this or that?' [being a play on words which cannot be rendered in English translation]. There is but one ruling spirit in the palace—that of the Archduchess." This caustic writer goes on to say: "The following would be a suitable inscription for her tomb, 'Here lies one who commenced with an Emperor and ended with a tenor.'"

Much as we dislike to admit that the ex-Empress, who was nearly fifty and had no longer the temptations and feelings of youth as an excuse, saddened the last years of her life by an old-age intrigue, there is no doubt that the relations between her and Jules Lecomte were of a most intimate nature. His stay at Parma, and at the Court, gave rise to all sorts of gossip and scandal. Indeed, this indiscreet Lovelace has given us a minute description of the "private apartments" of the sovereign. "In them," he writes, "is a large collection of portraits of members of the House of Austria painted by Isabey at Vienna. There are also a picture of the Duchesse de Montebello, one

of the Comtesse Lazanska, former governess to the young Austrian archduchess, and many portraits of the King of Rome, both in painting and sculpture. On the writing-table is a simple little *bonbonnière* on which the imperial child is represented praying to the Almighty for the welfare of France." Jules Lecomte, for whom nothing was secret in the private apartments of Marie-Louise, also mentions a fine picture of Napoleon by Gérard. "It is a full-face bust in the uniform of the Chasseurs de la Garde, and is in the little gallery in Marie-Louise's private apartment."

Jules Lecomte remained at Parma for "several months." On his return to Paris, not earlier than 1848, he again took up his pen and resumed an active part in editing the political and literary portion of the *Indépendance belge*, in which he started "Les Courriers de Paris," which had a great success. But in spite of his undoubted and remunerative literary achievements the author's life was much troubled.

That fatal imprisonment was ever before him, and his relentless enemies never wearied

of casting it in his face, both in newspapers and magazines. Added to these misfortunes, his health gave way. Changes of temperature had a strange effect on his constitution, and mental troubles worried him even more, his whole character being influenced by them. His manner became abrupt and nervous, and his appearance morose and dejected. There was a moment when Jules Lecomte thought that he had quite rehabilitated himself. In August 1860 he was awarded the Montyon prize by the Académie Française for a book entitled *La charité à Paris*. He was at once received in society and welcomed in literary circles. Happier days seemed in store for the unhappy author, who for twenty years had been the object of so much hatred. Ill luck, however, pursued him. The illness from which he had suffered so long was an incurable one—consumption complicated by a disease of the liver.

For seven years this romantic writer, who possessed an inexhaustible fund of imagination, and a truly French wit, edited the

"Chronique hebdomadaire" in the *Monde Illustré*.

On the very day of his death the "Courrier de Paris" appeared in the *Indépendance belge* over his signature, one of his friends having undertaken to finish it, as he was no longer able to hold a pen. . . . It was the end. The poor creature was panting for breath, and the words he tried to utter faded away on his colourless lips. Until the end, however, his brain remained clear and calm. Four hours before his death he had strength to murmur, "Has Yriarte come for my article for the *Monde Illustré?* . . . It is quite ready."

He died in his "Ranelagh" cottage in Paris on April 22, 1864, at nine in the evening and was buried at Montmartre two days afterwards.

His funeral was attended—not by a crowd, but by a few of the most prominent men in literature, all of whom wished to follow him to his last resting-place. Albéric Second, his best friend, was their spokesman, and expressed a few words of final farewell to the departed

colleague, praying that he might rest in peace.[1]

Charles Monselet relates in his *Mémoires* that when they opened Lecomte's will the following touching words were found: "I surrender my soul to the Almighty who knows what I have suffered."

The town of Boulogne, like a kind and indulgent mother, proved her readiness to forget

[1] Jules Lecomte was buried in the Montmartre cemetery in ground granted for five years only. On November 9, 1864, a certain M. Philipps of 61 Rue de la Victoire purchased a freehold grave in which to lay to rest the remains of the celebrated journalist.

The stone slab under which he lies is in the 29th division, 3rd line, No. 26, Avenue de la Croix. At the time we were making researches, a thick layer of moss which covered the stone rendered it impossible to decipher any inscription. After having had the slab, which was enclosed by a light iron fence, properly cleaned and scraped, we were able to read the following inscription on the grave-stone of one who sleeps and is forgotten—

JULES LECOMTE
AUTEUR DE
LA CHARITÉ A PARIS
OUVRAGE COURONNÉ PAR L'ACADÉMIE
DÉCÉDÉ
DANS SA CINQUANTE-QUATRIÈME ANNÉE
LE 22 AVRIL 1864.

the single youthful fault of one of her children, and heedless of the outcries of his enemies, conferred a public honour to his memory by giving to one of her streets the name of this man of letters who held so prominent a place in literature, and whose heart, little understood, had indeed drunk deeply of the cup of bitterness.

XVII

THE DEATH OF MARIE-LOUISE

As she advanced in years the habits of Marie-Louise became more simple and regular. Every morning—we are again indebted to Jules Lecomte for all these details—at about nine o'clock the "Grand-Maître" called to receive her instructions for the day. At the same time Bombelles handed in petitions and reports, etc., and conferred with her as to the business of the court and household. This was followed by a "short stroll in a garden" which communicated with her apartment, and in which was "a small green-house full of flowers, and an aviary, to the occupants of which she was wont to distribute tempting morsels." On returning home Marie-Louise occupied herself "with music, reading or work." In the afternoon she received and conferred with the heads of the various departments, military,

finance, home and foreign affairs. She appeared for "an hour or two" at the theatre every evening.[1]

[1] J. Lecomte, pp. 79 and 80. At the risk of being accused of giving undue attention to mere trifles, we will add a few details explanatory of the Archduchess's mode of life at this period of her history.

In the Modena Library are kept all the menus of the dinners served to the sovereign from December 19, 1846, to June 6, 1847, the majority of which show the alterations or additions made in her own handwriting. We give a few of them below which we have chosen haphazard and of different dates. They show precisely how Marie-Louise fared during the last years of her life.

Menu du dîner de Sa Majesté du 29 Décembre 1846: Le potage panade à l'allemande.—Le bœuf sauce Raifort au bouillon.—Les cervelles frittes (*sic*) garnies de carottes.—Le poulet rôti.—Brand Nockerln (ajouté au crayon de la main de la duchesse). Fait par Rousseau.

Menu du dîner de Sa Majesté du 2 Janvier 1847: Le potage Semel-Knödeln (Potage avec une sorte de boulettes de mie de pain).—Le bœuf sauce Raifort au bouillon.—Les cervelles frittes (*sic*) aux choux-raves.—La grive aux petits croûtons.—Le poulet rôti.—Croquettes de Roy (ajoutées au crayon de la main de la duchesse). Fait par Rousseau.

Menu du dîner de Sa Majesté du 14 Mars 1847: Le potage de Schlich-krapfen (Potage où entre une sorte de boulettes au vin blanc).—Le bœuf sauce Raifort à la crème.—Les foies de poulet frits aux épinards ou

While Marie-Louise was thus spending a peaceful and quiet life in her little duchy, the revolution was setting Europe ablaze. Even at Parma a party of malcontents had for a long time been intriguing against the prime minister, and took every opportunity of sowing the seeds of disaffection.

---

aux pointes d'asperges.—La grive rôtie.—Le poulet rôti.—Ris (*sic*) au lait. Fait par Rousseau.

Menu du dîner de Sa Majesté du 12 Avril 1847 : Le potage de Mehl-Schöberln (Pâtes en forme de losanges). —Le bœuf sauce Raifort à la crème.—Les foies de poulet frits aux carottes de Colorno.—La côtelette de veau.—Le poulet rôti.—Les asperges au suprême de Parme.—Gries Nocken au lait (Nocken à la semoule). —(ajouté au crayon de la main de la duchesse). Fait par Spies fils.

Menu du dîner de Sa Majesté du 16 Avril 1847 : Le potage panade à l'allemande.—Le bœuf sauce Raifort à la crème.—Les croquettes fines ou Bofosen de volaille (rayé).—La cervelle fritte (*sic*) aux épinards.—La poitrine de veau farcie à l'allemande (rayée).—Ragoût de veau à l'allemande (ajouté au crayon de la main de la duchesse).—Le poulet rôti.—Les asperges de Parme, au suprême. Fait par Spies fils, petite cuisine.

We gather from these menus, which are somewhat elaborate for everyday fare, that the Archduchess had a great weakness for beef with horse-radish sauce, and that she was certainly blessed with an excellent digestion. Manoscritti Campori, Biblioteca Estense (Modena).

Since the spring of 1847 the indication of approaching revolution had gradually become more marked and menacing.

In Italy Gregory XVI had recently died, and the Romans, whom he had ruled with a rod of iron, breathed again.

Pius IX, in accordance with the hopes he had inspired, appointed, as Secretary of State, Cardinal Gizzi, the true representative of liberal ideas in the Sacred College and, acting on his advice, reduced the expenses of the court, taxed the clergy and instituted reform in the civil, criminal and penal laws of the Roman States.

A wave of liberalism was rising in Italy.

The plan of campaign of the revolutionary party in Parma was to organize noisy demonstrations to emphasize the joy of the people at the news of the reforms in Rome, with the object of deceiving public opinion. We here quote an eye-witness of these events: "It commenced with verses, chants and hymns to the Holy Father, then followed distribution of bread to the poor in his honour. . . . Her Majesty the

Empress Marie-Louise left Parma in the month of June for the waters of Ischl, which she was accustomed to take every year for the benefit of her health. The Comte de Bombelles, as he took leave of the authorities, seemed instinctively to recognize the presence of those vague simmerings which always precede great political crises, and recommended the utmost vigilance and circumspection in the conduct of affairs. His fears were soon realized.

"Shortly after her Majesty's departure, in order to give a fitting termination to the preceding demonstrations, the revolutionary committee at Parma ordered a general illumination of the town—the pretext, of course, being the reforms instituted by the Holy See. . . . The police, although duly warned, were unable openly to oppose this fresh demonstration . . . so the illuminations took place. Cheers and songs developed into cries of sedition. Scenes of disorder and tumult followed, until the soldiers were called upon to compel obedience to the law.

"The plan of campaign was changed, and the

agitators decided that the soldiers who had done their duty should be held up to public execration and pronounced to be hired assassins. . . . The Comte de Bombelles, who was with the Empress at Vienna, showed no hesitation. At the first news of the disorders he returned to Parma. . . . He never flinched, but immediately declared himself against the organizers of the illuminations, and approved the action of the military authorities. It was a very anxious time for the Comte de Bombelles's friends and supporters, for ominous rumours respecting his personal safety were heard on all sides. Letters and anonymous notes were sent to him and to his friends, giving information as to plans for his assassination. Bombelles remained firm and resolute, and took measures to allay the agitation without giving way in the slightest degree to popular clamour."

When order had been re-established Bombelles rejoined the Empress at Ischl.

The tumult being at an end, and having finished her "cure" at the waters, Marie-

Louise decided to return to Parma, where she arrived on November 17.

Thursday, December 9, being a fine day, the Archduchess desired to take her usual drive, but Bombelles, having to attend a review at the Citadel, was unable to accompany her.

At twelve o'clock, before getting into her carriage, Marie-Louise complained to Mme. Zobel, her lady-in-waiting, that she had passed rather a bad night, and had been awakened several times by a pain on the right side of her chest. She did not, however, attach any importance to it, and entered the carriage with Mme. Zobel and the Comte dal Verme, chamberlain-in-waiting.

In a by-road outside the Nuova Porta, one of the horses shied at a wagon. Marie-Louise, terrified, hurriedly alighted and declared her intention of walking home, but her fright passed off and she again entered the carriage and continued her drive.

At two o'clock, as she was sitting down to breakfast, the Archduchess began to shiver, and could scarcely eat any food.

Dr. Fritsch, who chanced to call at half-past four without having been summoned, found her very feverish and begged her to go to bed. Notwithstanding her doctor's injunctions, she insisted on presiding over a council of her ministers, and at eight in the evening she received, as usual, the Comte de Bombelles, the Bishop of Parma, the Marquise Pallavicino, the Chamberlain-in-waiting, Colonel Kavaczay and her private librarian, the Abbé Mislin.

Marie-Louise showed no signs of indisposition during the evening. Dr. Fritsch, however, suspecting a return of fever, felt her pulse, and at once ordered her to bed. She obeyed—never to rise again.

Before midnight the pain in her side became acute. Fits of coughing followed, and suddenly the fever increased in a most "alarming manner."

At half-past twelve Dr. Fritsch applied leeches to the painful spot, and pronounced the illness to be "rheumatic pleurisy."

Marie-Louise was aware of her danger:

"Mark my words," she said, "I shall never rise again and in a week's time I shall be carried away from here."

The bleeding was profuse, and diminished the acuteness of the intercostal pain. The improvement was maintained during the entire day and night of the 10th.

Marie-Louise had requested Bombelles to write to Vienna, informing the imperial family of her illness.

On the 11th, towards evening, the fever again became more severe. Another application of leeches was made at eight o'clock which induced profuse perspiration, lasting the entire night, but bringing no relief.

The night was troubled and sleepless. At seven o'clock the following morning leeches were applied for the third time, but the fever continued with irregular paroxysms and intervals of relief.

On Sunday, December 12—her birthday—Marie-Louise, the first thing in the morning, sent for the Bishop of Parma.

"At nine o'clock Monsignor, after having confessed her, told her Majesty that, as she had not fasted, she could not take the Holy Communion as a simple act of religious devotion, and that he did not consider her in sufficient danger to receive the viaticum."

Then, as a token of her feelings of repentance, piety and religion, the Archduchess made the following declaration: "I forgive all who, under my peaceful government, have filled my heart with pain and caused me so much grief and anxiety. I hope that God, in His mercy, will pardon and enlighten them, and that they will serve their new sovereign with obedience, respect and fidelity."

A remarkable improvement was suddenly observed in the condition of the patient—like the bright flicker of an expiring light.

Marie-Louise felt, indeed, so much better that day, that she actually commenced making plans for her convalescence. She busied herself with some church embroidery she was working for Maria-Zell, whither she had made

a pilgrimage in the course of the summer. Above all, she was looking forward to her Christmas tree—a custom she had always adhered to, and which is universal in German families. She had brought with her from Vienna a mass of presents, which she had chosen herself, and desired to distribute on Christmas Day. She said, "If I am not well enough to have my Christmas tree in the evening, I will have it next day."

The improvement was maintained on the 12th, both the fever and cough having greatly diminished. Nevertheless, Dr. Fritsch proposed to the Empress that he should call two of his colleagues into consultation. Marie-Louise was only induced to consent by the doctor's statement that his responsibility was very great, and that his duty to the State and her Majesty's family rendered such a consultation necessary.

He suggested Dr. Fragni, the leading physician in Parma, and Dr. Geromini, professor of clinical medicine.

At one o'clock Marie-Louise signed the decree empowering her ministers to act as a Council of Regency. The consultation took place at five o'clock, and the new doctors did but express their approval of her Majesty's ordinary medical man's treatment. The patient, completely reassured, sent several letters off to Vienna, and among them one to her son, the Comte de Montenuovo.

During the evening the fever increased slightly and the breathing became more painful. This, however, did not cause alarm, and even on the morning of December 13 the mildness of the symptoms justified the hope that the imperial patient would recover. The chest trouble, however, did not diminish, and "the mustard poultices placed on several parts of the body had no effect. It was then thought advisable to apply a strong blister to the chest."

On that day three letters arrived for the Duchess of Parma from Vienna; one from the Emperor, her brother, and the others from Baron Amelin and the Comtesse de Vallis.

Bombelles only read her one—that from the Emperor, which merely contained his good wishes for her birthday. Her weakness increased, and at ten in the evening she was seized by a violent attack of fever "accompanied by severe pains in the chest" and fits of suffocation.

She had another sleepless night. A second consultation was held, which put an end to any faint hope that yet lingered with regard to her recovery. In spite of repeated doses of quinine the fever greatly increased towards ten o'clock in the morning and continued to do so till four in the afternoon. It was not until the early hours of the next morning that a slight abatement of the febrile symptoms enabled the Empress to get a little sleep.

The danger increased, and public processions were organized in Parma to beseech the Almighty to prolong the life of the sovereign. In spite of the progress of her illness, Marie-Louise's brain remained perfectly clear. She caused letters to be written to the Archduke

John, and to her sister, the Princesse de Salerne—both letters full of expressions of affection and giving the news of the gravity of her condition.

On the morning of the 15th the fever abated, but the weakness and exhaustion were extreme. In the afternoon the fever returned, and the feeling of suffocation was intense.

Marie-Louise was in this pitiable state when a letter arrived from Vienna which afforded her great delight—it was from the Comte de Montenuovo, the last she was to receive from him.

Marie-Louise was as ill as she could possibly be—she could no longer swallow. On the morning of the 16th the patient, suffering from feelings of suffocation and painful fits of coughing, could only give utterance to a few disjointed words. Arrangements were then made for the administration of the last sacrament. She received it calmly, and with the conviction that her end was near. When they were about to administer the Extreme Unction both her feet were covered. She was told that

the removal of one stocking would be sufficient, but she insisted that both feet should be bared, and that the purifying unction of the holy oils should be applied to them. She then asked for prayers for the dying and litanies for a peaceful death—and she herself said the responses to the verses intoned by the Bishop.

Having completed her devotions, and strengthened by the calm imparted by religion to the dying, Marie-Louise requested the Comte de Bombelles to give her the will she had made three years before. After it had been read to her, she acquainted her husband with her last wishes, and then expressed her thanks to all who had been able to help her, and to those who stood by her bedside. She begged the Comte de Bombelles to give to his daughter, the Comtesse Marie de Bombelles, as a remembrance, the ivory crucifix which hung from the curtains of her bed and which would receive her last breath.

She also expressed the wish that every member of her household should be given, "as

a souvenir, some trifle that she had continually used." Bombelles immediately directed M. Challiot to commit to paper the verbal wishes of Marie-Louise, which she evinced a desire to sign. The Comte de Bombelles handed her the document, but she was now so weak that she sought in vain to attach her signature to it. She could scarcely make a stroke, although supported by the Comtesse de Sanvitale, who by guiding her trembling hand endeavoured to complete the signature.

Marie-Louise then told her daughter to summon her grandchildren. When they entered the room with the Comte Sanvitale, the dying woman said, "I sent for you that I might give you my last blessing." Every one knelt by the bedside. The Empress, being too weak to move, was unable to place her hands on the heads of the four children she desired to bless. They stood up, and their grandmother addressed them as follows: "I feel very ill, my dear children, and I have just taken the Holy Communion. I wished to see you again in

order to embrace and bless you. If the Almighty has decreed that I should die, I will pray that He may make you happy. Think of me in your prayers, respect my memory, and prove it by being religious, good, obedient to your parents and doing your duty. Always remember what I say to you now. If God grants that I may recover, I trust that the blessing I give you to-day, while recommending you to His care, may not be in vain, and that He will give heed to the prayers of a dying woman. I bless you, my dear children, respect my memory and do not forget your grandmother."

The Comte Sanvitale then kissed the hand of his mother-in-law. "Good-bye, Louis," said the Empress, "I want you also to remember me. I hope that the inhabitants of Parma will not forget me, for I have loved them dearly, and have always striven for their good." She then clasped the hand of her son-in-law in an eternal farewell. The Comtesse Sanvitale, having mentioned the name of Guillaume, Marie-Louise said, "If I do not see him again,

tell him that I have blessed him in my thoughts, and that I shall pray for his happiness from on high."

It was the ninth day of the illness. On December 17 the Empress was on the point of death. Her breath was short and stertorous, and her heart beat quickly and unevenly. Notwithstanding all these symptoms of approaching death, she still retained her mental faculties —still endeavoured to make herself understood by words and signs, and in the morning was able to take a little jelly and broth. She sent for the Comtesse Marie de Bombelles and her two court ladies, but she could only give them a dying hand, which they covered with kisses and tears.

An old woman with wrinkled face among the attendants wept bitterly. She was a Frenchwoman, Mme. Miannée, who had been for thirty-five years in the Archduchess's service.

She approached the bed, followed by another waiting-maid, Mme. Lauger, and with pious respect they both kissed their mistress's

hand and then, with many tears, bade her a last good-bye. At mid-day the Archduchess had an attack of sickness, and subsequently fell into a state of coma, from which she never awoke. Ten minutes later she passed peacefully away.

Marie-Louise had expressed a wish that there should be no post-mortem examination.

The Empress lay in state on a bed covered with gold-fringed velvet in the *salon* of the ducal palace, which had been converted into a mortuary chapel. She was dressed in black silk, over which were a white robe and a magnificent red mantle embroidered with gold. A white veil was about her head, and she wore white shoes. Round her neck was the collar of the Order of Constantinien de St. Georges. On her breast were all her decorations, and in her clasped hands she held a crucifix and rosary. She lay in state until December 20, on the afternoon of which day she was placed in her coffin, made of pine wood and lined with purple velvet and in which was a horse-hair

mattress and a white silk pillow. A crucifix rested on her breast, and a rosary in her hands. A small brass receptacle containing a crystal box, in which was a parchment, inscribed with the name and titles of the sovereign, was placed in a corner of the coffin. This wooden coffin was then closed, and placed in one of lead, which again was put into a third of polished chestnut.

The coffin, covered with a velvet pall bearing a gold cross, was then moved to the spot where the body had lain in state.

The funeral took place on December 24, the service being held in the Church of Saint-Louis.[1] The Archduke Ferdinand d'Este, who

[1] A placard placed on the door of the church and couched in the following terms, invited the population to the funeral service :—

MARIÆ LUDOVICÆ
IMP. CŒS. FRANCISCI I. AUG. FILIÆ AUG.
ARCHIDUCI AUSTR. DUCI N.
PARENTALIA
AGITE O CIVES
PRINCIPI
QUÆ BENE DE UNIVERSIS MERITA EST
BENE INVICEM ADPRECAMINI.

had come expressly from Modena, the entire court, and the members of all State institutions were present. The Bishop of Parma pronounced the absolution, and at the conclusion of the ceremony the coffin was conveyed to Vienna to be placed in the crypt of the Capuchin Church, where it now rests, separated by but six monuments from the bronze bed where sleeps the Duc de Reichstadt.

XVIII

THE LAST YEARS AND DEATH OF THE COMTE DE BOMBELLES

A FEW days after the death of Marie-Louise the Comte de Bombelles handed the reins of government to the new sovereign, Charles-Louis de Bourbon.[1]

[1] Charles-Louis de Bourbon, duc de Lucca, son of the Infanta Marie-Louise of Spain, ex-Queen of Etruria, did not long retain the possession of these Duchies. Turned out of his States in 1848 in consequence of an insurrection, he abdicated March 14, 1849, in favour of his son, Charles III, who was married to the daughter of the Duc de Berry, who was stabbed in the heart with a dagger by a modern Louvel, March 26, 1854.

Robert I, born at Florence July 9, 1848, eldest son of Charles III, was then proclaimed Duke, under the regency of his mother Louise-Marie-Thérèse de Bourbon, daughter of the Duc de Berry and sister of the Comte de Chambord. He reigned until the Italian War, 1859. The young Duke then left his States, which, in 1860, voted in favour of their reunion with

Bombelles's mission was at an end. Two months sufficed for him to wind up the accounts relating to the succession of Prince Leopold, son of the Archduke Régnier, nephew as well as god-son of Marie-Louise, whom she had made her residuary legatee, "and to hand over to the Prince's representative the capital,

---

the kingdom of Italy, of which they are now a province. The Duke of Parma married firstly, at Rome in 1869, Marie-Pie, Princesse de Bourbon-Siciles, whose sister, the Princesse Louise, his brother the Comte de Bardi married. It is a curious fact that the two brothers eventually married two other sisters, the Princesses Maria Antonia and Aldegonde, infantas of Portugal.

The marriages of the Duke of Parma were most fruitful—by his first wife he had eight children, and twelve by the second.

Let us add that the Duke of Parma, nephew of the Comte de Chambord, inherited the greater part of his uncle's fortune and the castle bearing his name; that it was he who was chief mourner at the Comte de Chambord's funeral, and that a few years ago he sanctioned the marriage of his daughter with Prince Ferdinand, grandson of Louis-Philippe.

The Duke of Parma, who kept aloof from politics during the whole of his life, died only a few months ago.

securities, jewellery and plate of which her personalty consisted."

Marie-Louise's will is too long to quote in its entirety, but we must draw attention to its principal provisions.

"In the name of the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost: before all I yield my soul to the Almighty, and I beg Him of His great mercy to accept it. I desire the following wishes should be carried out at my death—

"I.—I desire that there should be no autopsy, but that my body should be injected with arsenic, according to the new method now in use in Italy.

"This desire, however, is subject to the wishes of my principal medical man. Should he demand an autopsy for his own satisfaction, I have no objection.

"IV.—I bequeath to the Comtesse Albertine-Marie de Sanvitale—*née* Comtesse de Montenuovo—a sum of 300,000 florins in Vienna bonds at 5 per cent., representing an income

of 30,000 florins. The above-mentioned bonds are deposited in the private court chancery in Vienna.

"V.—I bequeath to the Comte Guillaume de Montenuovo a sum of 300,000 florins in Vienna bonds at 5 per cent., representing an income of 30,000 florins. The above-mentioned bonds are deposited in the private court chancery in Vienna.

"XVII.—I bequeath to the Comte Charles de Bombelles, whom I married secretly on February 17, 1834, the sum of 300,000 Italian livres, in Milanese bonds, a legacy secured by public documents in my possession." (Marie-Louise also left him her picture by Gérard, now in the possession of the Comtesse Françoise de Bombelles at Presbourg, all her books and all her MSS.)

"XXXIII.—I add to my will a list of the legacies I bequeath to different persons.

"XXXIV.—After the above arrangements have been fulfilled, I bequeath the remainder of my real estate and personalty to my godson, the Archduke Leopold, eldest son of my

uncle the Archduke Regnier, and of my aunt the Archduchess Elizabeth.

"Parma, May 22, 1844.

"(*Signed*) MARIE-LOUISE.

"NEUMANN, BOMBELLES.

"P.S. AL. A.

"RICHER.

"R. GEN. MAGGIORE.

"G. BERTOLINI.

"CHALLIOT."

Beneath the signatures is a red and white ribbon (colours of the House of Austria), to which are attached two state seals in black wax.

The will fills seven large pages and the codicils are contained in a volume of several hundred pages.

We quote from the list of legacies mentioned in Clause XXXIII of the will those which relate to the Comte and Comtesse de Montenuovo—

"53.—I bequeath to the Comtesse Albertine-Marie de Sanvitale—*née* Comtesse de Montenuovo—my set of turquoises and diamonds,

which consists of a necklace, earrings and a Sévigné.

"My necklace of five rows of pearls with clasp in the shape of a diamond knot with a green stone in the centre.

"My pear-shaped earrings surmounted by small caps of brilliants and two large diamond 'châtons.'

"My 'girandole' pearl earrings. A gold bracelet consisting of a chain and two chased medallions, in which are the portraits of the Comtesse de Sanvitale and the Comte Guillaume de Montenuovo as children.

"A bracelet consisting of one large and eight small gold discs enamelled in black, with portrait, No. 85.

"A bracelet of dull gold, in the shape of a serpent, crowned with six small turquoises, No. 116.

"A gold and black enamel bracelet with small flowers, and white, blue and green ornaments, with one large plaque under which are four small paintings, No. 139.

"A plain gold bracelet to which a small

crucifix is attached, and in which is some of the late General's hair.

"A small locket with the portrait of the Comte Guillaume de Montenuovo as a child.

"A gold locket attached to the chain which I always wear round my neck, and which contains a miniature of General Neipperg's eye.[1]

"A large gold locket which opens and contains the picture of a winged child in a cloud.

"Three gold rings called 'Alliance' rings, which I wear on my right hand. To one of these rings is attached a smaller one.

"A gold ring in the shape of a rosary with a small disc on which is a crucifix in the centre.

"Another gold ring with a cameo representing a mask. I also wear these rings constantly on my right hand.

"A small marble bust of the Comte de Neipperg in my drawing-room at Sala.

[1] It was the custom in those days to wear as a charm small paintings of the eye of a great friend or relation. A collection of such charms is to be seen in the Condé Museum at Chantilly.

"The mask of the late General and his hand in marble.

"A water-colour drawing of the room in which the General died.

"A water-colour drawing of the late General's study.

"A little oblong mahogany work-box—one corner broken. All the fittings are of mother-of-pearl and steel. I have used this box continually since the year 1810.

"My paint-box of reddish wood with white lines. It contains all the requisites for water-colour drawing. I have had it constantly by me since 1815.

"54.—I bequeath to the Comte Guillaume de Montenuovo two rows of *châtons* and the earrings belonging to my diamond set.

"My medal cabinet, containing the medals of the Emperor Napoleon's reign.

"The gold locket which I wear at my neck and which contains the hair of the late General.

"The little golden crucifix which I always wear at my neck, and at the back of which is

inscribed: 'Pencil sketch of the late General after death, by Professor Callegari.'

"A small Morocco pocket-book with pencil, containing a miniature of the late Comte de Neipperg.

"All the portraits of the Comtesse Albertine Sanvitale in my possession, whether pencil sketches or paintings.

"A small gold locket containing the portrait of the Comtesse de Sanvitale when a child.

"The harpsichord in my drawing-room at Sala.

"A square Russian leather writing-case, which closes by means of strap and buckle.

"A Morocco blotting-book with tooled design—with engraved steel clasp. I have used this blotting-book continually for many years.

"55.—I bequeath to the Comtesse Albertine-Marie Sanvitale and to the Comte Guillaume de Montenuovo all the music which, at my death, will be found in the drawing-rooms at Parma and Sala and in the cupboards of the

little room next the bath-room at Parma. They will divide this by mutual agreement."

These lengthy extracts, which may have seemed tedious to some of our readers, are not wholly devoid of charm and interest. In the first place, they specify the numerous jewels possessed by the former sovereign of Parma, allude directly to her third marriage and reveal the undoubted embarrassment of the writer when mentioning her second husband. The words "husband" and "father" are carefully avoided.

Marie-Louise bequeathed to her children some of "the General's" hair, a "miniature of the eye of General Neipperg," a "small marble bust of the late Comte de Neipperg," "the mask and hand of the late General," water-colour drawings of the "room in which the General died," and of "the General's" study, more of the "deceased General's hair," a "portrait of the General after death," and another miniature of the "late Comte de Neipperg." Marie-Louise evidently recognized the fact

that the births of her children had never been properly legalized.

We must now return to the third husband.

The Emperor Ferdinand, desirous of showing his gratitude to Comte Bombelles for the services he had rendered to the imperial family, appointed him "Grand Maître" to the Empress.

Political events, however, prevented the appointment being carried into effect.

The revolution of February had set Europe ablaze, caused thrones to totter and shaken old and effete institutions to their very foundations. Vienna, the capital of absolutism, was the first to suffer from the reaction of 1848. The Emperor fled to the Tyrol and abdicated in favour of his nephew.

The Comte Henri de Bombelles, tutor to the Prince Imperial, who was, of course, an object of hatred to the revolutionary party, had followed the young Archdukes and their parents from Vienna to Innsbruck. The similarity of name was fatal to Comte Charles,

against whom all the fury of the insurgents was directed. One night, we are told by M. Challiot, he had to escape from his house, leave the town and wander about the neighbouring villages with his daughter, who was seriously ill at the time. He was then arrested and kept in solitary confinement until his persecutors discovered their mistake.

When, after the re-establishment of order, the town of Prague was selected as the place of residence of the ex-Emperor Ferdinand, the post of "Grand Maître" of the court was offered to and accepted by Charles de Bombelles. He held that position for three years, and gave evidence in the performance of his duties of the same qualities of method, economy and energy which had characterized his administration at Parma.

But old age had overtaken him and, with a sense of weariness and a longing for repose, he left Prague in the month of May 1855. He had but one more year to live.

Forgetting the romantic adventures of his life, and desirous of ending his days far from

the madding crowd, he took up his abode at Versailles, the place of his birth. His wish was to end his worldly career there in silence and repose, before entering on the silence and repose of death. "This is where I intend to remain in seclusion," he said, "and where I shall devote myself to thoughts of the next world. One must prepare for death."

He took a quiet apartment at 7 Rue de la Bibliotèque, the former house of "Mademoiselle" in the reign of Louis XIV, which must frequently have reminded its new tenant of those orgies of lace and fine clothes, calculated to justify the action of the populace, who, in the following century, revolted in such a terrible manner.

He had scarcely established himself at Versailles when the Emperor of Austria conferred upon him the Grand Collar of the Order of the Iron Crown, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Joseph, as tokens of their appreciation of his services.

Amidst these quiet surroundings the Comte

de Bombelles, who had fully shared the responsibilities of power, lived the most peaceful of lives with his young daughter, to whom he was devoted, spending his time in good works and the practice of Christian virtues. "He found relaxation and pleasure in corresponding with old friends, some of whom belonged to Parma, for which place he retained a sincere affection, and which was continually benefiting by his generosity, for he spent in charity a great portion of the pension he received from the Duchies after the death of Marie-Louise.

Towards the end of the autumn of 1855 a marked change was apparent in the health of the Comte de Bombelles. He called in Dr. Penard, a Versailles medical man. This physician advised a consultation with a professor of the faculty of Paris, who was fain to confirm the worst fears of the Versailles doctor with regard to the grave nature of the Comte's condition. "The patient was suffering from a slow and occult ailment, mental depression and the gradual deterioration of the vital powers."

The winter was a sad one, nor did the spring bring any improvement to the patient's health. The Comte Louis de Bombelles, his son, being informed in Vienna of the dangerous condition in which his father was, hurried on the journey which he had previously intended to undertake with his young wife, and reached Versailles at the beginning of May. On the 16th the Count took to his bed.

Two days after he was visited by R. P. de Ponlevoy, to whom he had caused his dangerous state to be communicated. "He was beyond measure pleased to see him," wrote his daughter, "and at once confessed to him." As the priest took leave of him, he said, with deep feeling, "Thank you, thank you, Father; if in the course of my life it has been my good fortune to be able to be of use to 'La Compagnie' [Jesuits] you have now amply repaid me."

On the following day, May 20, he took the Holy Communion and, at his request, his daughter read prayers and portions of the Scriptures to him—thus was the remainder of

COUNT CARLO DI BOMBELLES.

the day spent. At 5 a.m. on the morning of the 27th he received with resignation and piety the last sacrament, which was administered to him in the presence of his family by the Abbé Brassier. At the conclusion of the service the priest begged him to pronounce a blessing on his children.

These words at once revived the dying man who, summoning all his strength, calmly exclaimed, "Yes, I bless you, I bless you with all my heart, my dear children, and also my grandchildren who are not here."

Seeing his valet in tears, he bade him take courage and begged him to remain with him during that night. At the same time, perceiving that the man looked completely exhausted, he desired him to call in some one to assist him, and expressed his gratitude to the servant for his long and faithful services.

Then, turning to his daughter, he said, "Do not grieve, we shall meet in heaven, and that is everything." Finally, on May 30, towards evening, feeling that his strength was failing, he looked towards heaven and his lips moved

for the last time, uttering the words, "My God —Thy will be done." Soon afterwards he closed his eyes, and at half-past eleven, with the calmness of a philosopher and the resignation of a saint, he passed away without delirium and without pain.

The funeral service was held at Versailles in the Church of St. Louis, his parish church, but, in accordance with his last wishes, his remains were conveyed on June 4, 1856 to Grisy-sur-Seine, Seine-et-Marne,[1] and placed in the little country-side church, towards the building of which he had contributed during the last years of his life.

He had expressed the wish to be buried in the small chapel of the Holy Virgin, so as to rest near the heart of his children's mother, which he had caused to be placed there a few days before his death. There is no inscription on the stone which lies over him in the centre of the chapel—but on a slab of black marble,

[1] A small village of 137 inhabitants, 8 kilometres from Bray-sur-Seine, where the Bombelles family owned a large farm of 300 hectares, called l'Isle-Grisy.

on the wall at the right-hand side of the chapel, is the following epitaph—

MEMORIÆ
EXCELLENTISS. COMITIS CAROLI RENATI
DE BOMBELLES
PLURIUM ORDINUM ET CRUCE MAJORI INSIGNITI
APUD S. M. CŒS. REG. APOSTOL.
CUBICULARII ET A SECRETORIBUS CONSILIIS PALATII
MAGISTERIO FUNCTI.
APUD DOM. ARCHIDUCISSÆ MARIÆ LUDOVICÆ
DUCISSÆ PARMENSIS MAJESTATEM
IBIDEM PER 15 ANNOS SUMMÆ RERUM PREPOSITI,
POSTEA SUMMI IN AULA MAJESTATIS SUÆ IMPERATORIS
FERDINANDI I MAGISTRI.
QUÆCUMQUE EGIT, RELIGIONIS AUGMENTO FAVEBANT,
JUSTITIÆ, PUBLICO ORDINI, BENIGNITATI.
NATUS DIE 6 MENS. NOV. 1784 VERSALIIS,
IBI SPIRITUM CŒLO REDDIDIT DIE 30 MENS. MAII 1856.
PROUT IPSE VOLUIT CORPUS EJUS GRISIUM DELATUM,
DIE 4 MENS. JUNII TERRÆ MANDATUM,
DIE VERO 30 MAII 1857 IN SACELLO HUJUS ECCLESIÆ,
AB IPSO EJUSQUE LIBERIS IN HONOREM SANCTISS.
VIRGINIS ÆDIFICATO,
CONDITUM EST;
QUOD UT RELIGIOSE EXTRUXIT ITA GENEROSE PROTEXIT;
IN CHRISTUM ET PAUPERES PIUS.

Once a month, in accordance with a clause in the will, and in consideration of a sum of money bequeathed to the church by the statesman who lies in that unfrequented spot, the

parish curate, after the sermon, says a *Pater* and an *Ave* for the repose of his soul.

Louis, the eldest of the Comte de Bombelles's children, who formerly served in the Austrian army, was, a few years ago, still living, though an octogenarian.

His daughter, the Comtesse Marie, a model of goodness, amiability and tenderness of heart, having no longer a father to live for, resolved to exist for God alone, and spent the remainder of a life which had been sorely tried in the peace and seclusion of a Vienna convent.

XIX

THE COMTE GUILLAUME AND THE COMTESSE ALBERTINE DE MONTENUOVO

In this last chapter we will relate what, with all their changes of fortune, became of the two surviving children of Marie-Louise and her second husband. The eldest, Albertine, had four children by her marriage with the Comte Louis Sanvitale. A son, Albert, was born on August 28, 1834. In 1836 a daughter, Marie, was born, and a son, Stéphane, followed in 1838. A few years later another daughter, Louise, came into the world to complete the family.

Until the death of Marie-Louise the Comte and Comtesse Sanvitale lived harmoniously together at the court, but soon death invaded that happy home and both Marie and Louise were taken almost at the same time from their sorrowing parents.

It was not given to the Comtesse Sanvitale to mourn her two children in peace. Misfortune in another shape was about to fall upon one who had already been so cruelly tried. In 1848 Italy was ablaze under the influence of the liberal ideas which had come from France. Proud of their past, and groaning under the yoke of Austria, the Italians strove for independence and unity with general enthusiasm, supported by the chivalrous sword of Charles Albert and blessed by the worthy Pius IX.

Revolutionary movements broke out at Parma as they did throughout the peninsula, and the Comtesse Sanvitale, in agreement with the ideas of her husband, resolutely embraced the cause of the liberty of her fatherland. The Comte was even called upon, by a vote of his fellow citizens, to be President of the Provisional Government of the Duchy.

But after the sad events of Novara and the sanguinary reaction which followed them, Louis Sanvitale was exiled and his possessions confiscated.[1]

[1] Later, by decree of Charles III, the expenses

Marie-Louise's former chamberlain, who had been the guest of kings, went to live at Geneva away from his wife and family, in a state approaching to poverty.

The Comtesse, who moved to Fontanellato, devoted herself to the education of her two sons and to works of charity, to which she had always been accustomed in days of stress as well as in those of prosperity.

In 1854 the Comte returned from exile. Although vanquished, Italy continued to aspire to unity and independence, and the Italian question was tending towards its only possible solution, that of the sword.

The son of Charles-Albert, whom the nation had chosen as their supreme leader, held high the three-colour flag which had braved so many battles.

Young men from all directions rallied to this symbol of unity, and the eldest of the Comtesse

---

allowed by the provisional government were charged to those who had sanctioned them, and the fortune of the Comte de Sanvitale was sensibly affected by this despotic act of the reigning sovereign.

de Sanvitale's two sons, brought up by his parents in the love of his country and its glorious past, made ready to take part in the struggle about to commence in the cause of independence, without the knowledge of his mother.

He at first "opened his heart" respecting his intentions to his father, who fully approved of them. To his mother, fearing to give her too rude a shock, he revealed his plans with the utmost caution.

It was a terrible moment for the Comtesse de Sanvitale, who at once thought of her brother, the Comte de Montenuovo, now serving in the Austrian army, to which he had, of course, taken the oath of allegiance.

She was not long in coming to a decision.

She felt that Italy was her country, and every other sentiment yielded to that of devotion to her fatherland. After a few moments of mental anguish, she said to her son, "Go, do your duty, and my blessing goes with you."

Albert at once left to join his comrades, and

a year later returned with the rank of captain of artillery.

When, by the uprising of central Italy, Victor Emmanuel became sovereign of Tuscany, Parma, Modena, Bologna and the Legations, Comte Louis Sanvitale obtained a seat in the senate of his country.

The Comtesse Albertine, surrounded by chosen friends, and adored by her relations, especially by her cousin, Comte Jacob Sanvitale, devoted the last years of a life hitherto so full of sorrow to doing good and alleviating the woes of the suffering at Fontanellato, the spot she had chosen for her dignified retirement.

She died, almost suddenly, from a attack of pleurisy on December 26, 1867. She was buried in the Church of St. John the Evangelist, where, on a monument erected by her family, is a fine representation in marble of the Comtesse with an aged man and an orphan beside her, to perpetuate the memory of her charity and good works.

The Comte de Montenuovo was spared the trials and sorrows which had been the lot of his sister Albertine.

His military career was one continued chain of successes and, even until he approached old age, the only burdens he had to bear were those of honour and good fortune.

Brought up and educated under the indulgent supervision of Marie-Louise, he became a bright impetuous boy, and so impatient was he of restraint that there was a question, when he was thirteen years of age, of his being sent to school with a view to overcoming his ungovernable temper and checking his independent ideas.[1]

His delicate state of health, moreover, was the cause of considerable anxiety to his mother. He was thin and pale, and at times had great

[1] "I have not yet made up my mind about Guillaume, whether to keep him with me or send him to a public school, which would be the best thing for a boy of his temperament, but the disadvantages of the latter course rather perturb me, although I feel it would be for his good. (Denn er hat so einen Widerspruchsgeist, dass er braucht sich abzustossen.) Letter from Marie-Louise to Mme. de Crenneville, March 10, 1834.

difficulty in breathing.[1] As he grew up, however, his health improved.

In February 1838, at the age of seventeen, he joined the 5th battalion of Chasseurs in the Austrian army as lieutenant. He was subsequently promoted to the rank of first lieutenant in the Light Horse and, in the following year, became captain and subsequently, in 1843, major. He was then twenty-two years old. He became lieutenant-colonel of an infantry regiment in 1847 and was, a year later, second in command of the 4th regiment of Cuirassiers, soon afterwards obtaining the command of the 7th regiment of Light Horse.

He was destined in his military career to be associated in some way or other with all the historical incidents of the time. In 1848, when twenty-seven years old, he took part, as a colonel, in all the events of the campaign in Piedmont, that outpost destined by politics,

[1] "Guillaume is drinking seltzer water, which I hope will do him good. He grows enormously, but is very thin, *und so engbrüstig* [so narrow-chested], which makes me always anxious about him. . . ." Letter to the same, July 5, 1835.

nature and history to achieve the great work of the deliverance and independence of Italy.

We will not follow him to Ponteba, Pastrengo, Osteria, Santa-Lucia, Curtatone, Vicenza, Custozza, Cremona and Turano, which marked the successive stages of this war. Suffice it to draw attention, at this period of his career, to his conduct during the attack on the fort of Brescello, where his intrepid courage and strategical skill brought about the capture of this important place, which cost the enemy 27 officers, 700 men and 51 guns.

The scene changes. The Hungarians, thanks to the general upheaval of 1848, deemed themselves in a position at last to obtain their independence.

Then commenced that arduous, obstinate struggle, carried on with alternate successes and reverses, which, in all probability, would have ended in disaster to the Austrian troops, had it not been for the intervention of Russia.

At the very commencement of hostilities, the Comte de Montenuovo was summoned to the seat of war. He was present at the skirmish at

Nadas, the capture of Tyrnau, the battle of Zamoly and shortly afterwards at the victory of Kapolna, where the charge he made at the head of only three squadrons of light horse decided the fortunes of the day. For this brilliant achievement he was accorded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Leopold, and was given the command of a brigade of cavalry.

On February 28, 1849, he gave further proof of his wonderful combination of courage, skill and daring.

The troops at Den, having been surprised by the enemy, were being completely routed. The Comte de Montenuovo, who was scouring the country with a small body of troops not far off, heard the firing.

Always rapid in movement, he set off at the trot and, by drawing the efforts of the Hungarians against himself, and pushing home a vigorous charge, was able to turn the tide of battle and force the enemy to retreat.

A few days afterwards he suddenly found himself confronted at Hort by an entire corps

of the Hungarian army much superior to himself in numbers.

Intoxicated by the smell of powder, the roar of cannon and the din of battle, he addressed a few words of encouragement to the men and then, at the head of three squadrons, hurled himself against twelve squadrons of the enemy, which he overthrew and put to flight.

For this exploit the Comte de Montenuovo, who had on so many occasions handsomely paid the debt he owed to his country and who had won his promotion at the point of the sword, received the highest military reward—the Knight's Cross of the Order of Marie Thérèse.

When the disastrous capitulation of Vilagos, which delivered the troops of Gœrgey into the hands of the Russians, was signed, the Comte de Montenuovo was detailed to escort the Hungarian army to the gates of Arard.

In 1854 he was promoted to the rank of "Lieutenant-Field-Marshal."

His military career, however, was not yet at an end, and he took part in fresh encounters

ending in misfortunes and defeats, for which he was in no way responsible.

Then followed the year 1859.

The work interrupted by the disasters of Novara was resumed under the disinterested auspices of the spirit of France and her troops.

Montenuovo participated in nearly all the events of the Italian campaign, Magenta, Castenedole and Solferino, where the generals of the two armies rivalled each other in heroism, and where the valour of the Austrians equalled that of the troops which vanquished them.

The Comte de Montenuovo was granted the Iron Crown of the second class for his services in this campaign. On his return to Vienna he was transferred to the second army corps, as general of division. At the same time he was appointed Privy Councillor to the Emperor, and shortly afterwards was given the command of the troops in Transylvania, which appointment he held until 1866, when he was given the general command in Bohemia, and while in that position he was honoured with the Golden Fleece. In the midst of his campaigning he

had, at the age of thirty, married a Hungarian Comtesse of good and ancient family, whose outward charms were equalled, if not surpassed, by the exquisite qualities of her mind and heart. Her name was Julienne-Jeanne-Marie-Stéphanie. She was the daughter of Jean-Baptiste de Batthyani-Strattmann.

A daughter, Albertine-Léopoldine-Wilhelmine-Julie-Marie, the result of this marriage, was born on June 30, 1853. In the following year, on September 16, a son, Alfred-Adam-Guillaume-Ysan-Marie, was born.

Five years later, on September 10, 1859, there came another daughter, Marie-Sophie-Wilhelmine-Hyacinthe who, on May 23, 1878, married the Comte Antoine Apponyi.

On July 20, 1864, by an imperial decree the Count of Montenuovo was created an Austrian Prince, with the title of Most Serene Highness, and the right of quartering in his coat-of-arms those of his mother, the Duchess of Parma and those of the Comte de Neipperg. In 1870 he became captain of the imperial bodyguard and General of Cavalry. Eventually on Sep-

tember 1, 1878, he left the army, and it cannot be denied that he well deserved a rest after so many long years of service.

He soon became a popular figure in Vienna. He was tall and slight, had charming manners and was courteous and affable to all. He could daily be seen with curled up moustache and a stick in his hand enjoying, without a vestige of haughtiness, the advantages of his semi-incognito, as he strolled about the boulevards, living the life of an ordinary individual and associating with the people.[1]

This very agreeable man was not only highly educated, but was also an excellent musician. He played the piano well and composed many popular valses and songs.

[1] An incident perhaps worth recalling, and associated with his name, suddenly became a topic of conversation in Vienna. While his luxurious Strauchgass house was in course of construction—it now belongs to the "Anglo Bank," it was rumoured that the contractor, Engel by name, had been using rubble, etc., instead of stone. A sensational trial followed, during which truth of these allegations was proved, with the result that the unscrupulous contractor was sent to prison for five years.

With all these honours heaped upon him one would have thought that the son of the former sovereign of Parma had but to live and be happy. But fate, which seemed to pursue the offspring of Marie-Louise, decreed otherwise.

For some time the Prince's mind had been gradually failing. A nervous derangement had attacked and ruined his conspicuous mental powers, and the old General commenced to show evident signs of incipient madness, which on May 24, 1880, necessitated his being placed in an asylum at Döbling, near Vienna. He was destined never to leave that establishment. The malady made rapid progress, and the patient was soon confined to his room. Now and then, with a vacant stare and idiotic expression, seemingly unable to see or understand, he would receive visits from some of his relations and friends. Deprived of all his mental faculties, and now stone deaf, the poor demented creature would spend a portion of his time at the piano. It was truly piteous to see this old gentleman, who had been commander-in-chief on great occasions of contemporary

history, sit down before the instrument and play compositions of his poor disordered brain for hours at a time. About the middle of March 1895 the Prince had an attack of influenza, and took to his bed—from which he never rose. Pneumonia—one of the most frequent and serious results of this malady—supervened, as is often the case with old people. On April 6, 1895, he died amid the sad surroundings of the Döbling asylum, not far from the palace of Schœnbrünn, where the death of that most affectionate of children—the Duc de Reichstadt —had taken place, brought about, perhaps, more by political events than by the malady from which he suffered.

His son, Prince Alfred de Montenuovo, had married the Comtesse Françoise Kinsky, a lady of the palace, and a "dame de la Croix Etoilée."

He was a Chamberlain and Privy Councillor, a member of the Austrian Parliament, Knight of the Austrian Order of the Golden Fleece, Honorary Knight of the Order of Malta, and became Master of the Ceremonies to the Em-

peror Francis Joseph when Prince Lichtenstein resigned that appointment.

There were four children of the marriage, the eldest of whom, Julie, married on May 23, 1903, the Comte Dyonis Draskovich de Trakostyan, Chamberlain to the Emperor of Austria.

CONCLUSION

THE political as well as the private life of Marie-Louise has deserved just though severe criticism at the hands of historians.

We have, indeed, seen how the Archduchess, who married the illustrious Emperor, weak, unstable, indifferent alike to duty and decency, gradually but quickly developed into a neglectful mother and forgetful, unfaithful wife. In order to be just let us, like other historians, draw attention to all the extenuating circumstances which can be cited in her favour, such as the prejudices of her childhood and youth against the man whom neither her family nor her country could ever forgive for the defeats he inflicted on their armies at Marengo and Wagram.

Nor must we forget that the wiles of Austrian diplomacy forced her to associate with an un-

scrupulous libertine, with the express object of distracting her mind from her most sacred duties.

We must also remember the conduct of her father who, *in order to remain faithful to his allies*, countenanced this intrigue in which everything was done to stifle the feelings of a wife by means of the inherent weakness of a woman.

Verily others were more to blame than was Marie-Louise.

Nevertheless, if she did not care for the Emperor, respect and common decency should have prompted her to wait until death should have severed the ties which bound her to him before marrying another.

This is not the worst indictment to which Marie-Louise exposed herself, for we have seen how quickly, while basking in the sunshine of her lover's presence, she not only forgot her husband, but also her son, whom she permitted to be deprived of his name and maternal inheritance without offering the slightest resistance to such iniquitous proceedings.

It may well be asked whether Marie-Louise had any heart at all.

When Neipperg died there was a moment when one might have thought that her happiness had departed for ever, and that her spirits, pleasures, in fact, her whole life would be buried in the tomb of this "adored husband."

Her son had died almost at the same time.

We have also seen how this flighty, frivolous woman, forgetful of these two terrible losses, was led by her sensual nature and unbounded selfishness to marry a third time.

Flightiness and frivolity were indeed the governing characteristics of her whole life.

Indolent by nature, unmoved by the loss of her throne, caring for nought but dissipation, hating business, loving the bustle and pleasures of life, as inquisitive as a child, and as variable as a vane, Marie-Louise thought of nothing but her personal desires and inclinations.

As Empress she showed her dislike to affairs of state; as Regent she displayed the same indifference, without for a moment realizing the dignity of her position; at Parma, where she

was mistress of all her surroundings, oblivious of the past, she kept studiously aloof from all Government business and wiled away her hours of boredom by visiting theatres and occupying herself with music, painting and the like, leaving her husbands to devote themselves, which it is only just to say they conscientiously did, to the highest interests of her States.

Marie-Louise was neither sovereign, wife nor mother.

That is why M. Imbert de Saint-Amand wrote of her: "She will occupy but a miserable place in history. . . . France reproached her for abandoning Napoleon and, perhaps still more, for having chosen two such obscure individuals as successors to the most illustrious man of modern times." For our part we think that the insult offered by the ex-Empress to the Emperor's memory by these two marriages is less reprehensible than her abandonment of her unfortunate husband and her indifference in regard to France in 1814 and 1815.

The life of Marie-Louise ends so conveniently at the latter date as far as concerns the

country which showed her so much affection, that historians have hitherto not thought it worth while to follow the ex-Empress of a colossal Empire into her little corner in Italy.

In truth, in the eyes of posterity, which soars above human weakness and vulgar passions, this woman, devoid of every virtue and unworthy of her destiny, had but one husband, the man for whom she had no affection, the man who had placed her beside him on the proudest throne in the universe, whose colossal personality is still manifest in the politics of our days, and to whom alone is due the fact that her name is recorded in history.

INDEX

ALEXANDER I, Czar, 69
Antommarchi, Dr., 139–142

Bausset, Baron de, 17, 32, 42, 44, 46–7, 51, 54, 67, 113
Berry, Duc de, 36, 274
Berry, Mme. de, 177, 183
Bombelles, Marquis de, Bishop of Amiens, 212–15
Bombelles, Comte Charles de, third husband of Marie-Louise, birth and ancestry, 215; character and early career, 216–26; Grand Master of the Court of Parma, 227 *seq.*; marriage with Marie-Louise, 233–5; subdues the revolution in Parma, 256-8; end of his mission, 274–8; at Austrian court, and death, 284–92
Bonaparte, Louis, 110
Borghese, Princess, 110
Brignole, Mme. de, 17, 32, 51, 67, 73–4, 76–7

Caffarelli, 17
Caroline, Princess of Wales, meeting with Marie-Louise at Berne, 45–50; 138
Castlereagh, Lord, 54, 69
Cavaignac, Mme., 29
Charles-Louis de Bourbon, 69, 120, 274
Chateaubriand, reminiscences of Marie-Louise, 143–4
Cornacchia, Baron, 194
Corvisart, Dr., 17, 18
Crenneville, M. de (Mlle. de Pontet), 7–8, 11–12, 168, 177, 192, 198–201, 203, 210, 228, 298

Falloux, M. de, 235–9
Ferdinand III, Grand Duke of Tuscany, 61, 62, 68, 111
Fontainebleau, Treaty of, 68
Fontenoy, M. de, 113, 115
Francis I, Emperor of Austria, father of Marie-Louise, 7, 13, 18, 37, 57–8, 79 *note*, 96, 120, 121, 122, 136, 156–7, 167, 200

Geppert, General, 193
Gizzi, Cardinal, 256
Gregory XVI, 256

Haussonville, Comte d', 15
Hereau, Dr., medical attendant to Marie-Louise, 19, 67

Isabey, 35, 63

John, Archduke of Austria, uncle of Marie-Louise, 72

Lamartine, M. de, 158–61
Lecomte, Jules-François, birth and career, 242–5; relations with Marie-Louise, 246–8; subsequent career, and death, 249–52

Index

Leopold, Archduke, nephew of Marie-Louise, 275, 277–8
Ligne, Prince de, 53
Louis XVIII, 151, 222

Marie-Louise, childhood and youth, 7–9; marriage with Napoleon, 7, 10–13; visits Aix and meets Comte de Neipperg, 18–37; tour in Switzerland with Neipperg, 41–52; at Congress of Vienna, 53–77; at Schœnbrünn and Baden, 1815, 85–97; entry into Parma, 101 *seq.*; morganatic marriage with Neipperg, 126–8; birth of son, William Albert, 136–7; the will of Napoleon, 145–53; travel and life at Parma, 154–61; death of Neipperg, 162–71; third marriage, with Comte Charles de Bombelles, 233–4; relations with Jules-François Lecomte, 245–8; last days and death, 253–73; her will, 276–83; character and conclusion, 309–13
Mars, Mlle., 236–7
Marshall, Baron de, 195–6, 208, 212
Méneval, 9, 17, 19, 32–3, 36, 42, 44, 46–7, 51, 85, 88, 90–2
Metternich, Prince, 27, 29, 37, 54, 69, 71, 109, 110, 135, 142, 226–7
Mistrali, Baron Vincent, 194–5
Modena, Duke of, 194
Montebello, Duchesse de, 32
Montenuovo, Comte de (William Albert, son of Marie-Louise), 136–7, 269, 277, 280–2, 296, 298–308
Montesquiou, Mme. de, 73, 76, 85
Montet, Baronne du, 93–5, 137 *seq*, 216 *seq.*
Murat, 26, 27, 78, 80–3, 87

Napoleon, first husband of Marie-Louise: their marriage, 7, 10–13; his abdication, 14–15, 26–8, 34, 36; at Elba, 37–40, 60–62; return from Elba, 70 *seq.*; exile, 94–6; last days at St. Helena and death, 129–42, 145–50; his will, 150–3
Neipperg, Adam-Albert, Comte de, second husband of Marie-Louise: birth and ancestry, 21–4; his early career, 24–28; tour in Switzerland with Marie-Louise, 41–52; at Congress of Vienna, 60–77; at Parma with Marie-Louise, 101 *seq.*; morganatic marriage with Marie-Louise, 126–8; illness and death, 162–73; character and achievements, 173–6; references in will of Marie-Louise, 280, 282–4
Neipperg, Madame, 30, 89–90

Oppizoni, Cardinal, 193

Parma, history of the Duchy, 98–101, 274–5
Petrarch, 111–12
Pius IX, 256, 294
Pontet, Mlle. de, *see* Crenneville, Comtesse de.

Rabusson, Mlle., 19
Reichstadt, Duke of (King of Rome), son of Marie-Louise and Napoleon, 13, 64–5, 69,

75, 90–1, 113, 120, 121, 122, 123, 152–3, 171–2, 186, 193, 202–10, 273
Rossi, Chevalier, 139, 141

Saint-Amand, Imbert de, 85–7
Sainte-Aulaire, Comte de, 15
Sanvitale, Comte Stéphane, 232–3, 268–9, 293–97
Sanvitale, Comtesse de (Albertine, daughter of Marie-Louise), 232, 268, 276, 282, 293–7
Staël, Madame de, 26

Talleyrand, 37, 68, 177
Talma, 34, 236–7

Verona, Congress of, 142–4
Victor Emmanuel, 297
Vienna, Congress of, 53 *seq.*, 98, 120
Vitrolles, Baron de, 177–80

Werklein, M. de, 139, 188–91
Werner, Abbé, 65–7, 88–9

RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,
BREAD STREET HILL, E.C., AND
BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388
Return this material to the library
from which it was borrowed.

REC'D LD-URL
2-WEEKS
URL JAN 30 1997 OCT 19 1996

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 000 071 316 4